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[CARMINE FINDS A NEW HOME.]

ELLEN LAMBERT'S TWENTY YEARS.

By M. T. Caldor.

CHAPTER X.

Love is a gift which God hath given
To man alone beneath the heaven,
It is the secret sympathy,
The silver link, the silken tie,
Which heart to heart, and mind to mind,
In body and in soul can bind.

Kent Forsay was rather crestfallen as he dressed himself carefully for a visit to the Claxtons. He was mortified at his own lack of perception, angry at the vacillating thoughts which now accused Madame Lambert, and were again as positive in their evidence against Mat Rigby.

"I will drive off these tormenting reflections by visiting the Claxtons, and looking after Nolan. How fortunate that I despatched the basket while I believed myself generously supplied."

He was somewhat surprised to find an elegant little pony-carriage at the door, when he reached his destination, but paid no especial regard to the circumstance, until he was ushered into the family sitting-room by little Floy, when he at once conjectured that the elegantly dressed lady who sat by Mrs. Claxton's chair, with Nina standing close beside her, was its owner.

The family greeted him smilingly, and it was plain to see with genuine welcome.

Nina turned to the stranger with a slight smile of perplexity and embarrassment, mingled with archness.

"This is Mr. Forsay, Madame—Miss——"

"Miss Davenal," said the lady promptly, throwing back the rich lace veil, and looking up with a pleased smile into Kent Forsay's face.

He saw a countenance, Jewish in feature, with great eyes of such purplish blackness, you thought at once of all the old Italian pictures: cheeks of that dark, lovely clearness, flushed with a tint of carmine, which seldom appear beyond the languishing airs of Spain. A mouth, reticent, proud, and yet sensitive and sweet enough for the most high-bred English lady of the realm. A forehead wide and full, with parted waves of glossy black hair, reaching away from it, and peeping from beneath the dainty French bonnet in rich coils of triple braids behind. The elegance of her dress struck him likewise as somehow a part of her beauty and personality.

The young man bowed with the utmost respect, and a little show of gallant admiration. Then he turned to make his inquiries of the invalid.

Nolan's pale face and heavy eyes showed what sort of a night he had spent, but he himself scarcely spared time to answer Kent Forsay's questions coherently. It was plain to read on the frank, ingenuous face what a wonderful vision of grace and beauty this elegant young lady was to him. He could not afford to lose a single look or gesture, and Kent Forsay, finding it was cruel, as well as useless, to engross his attention, turned back again to the group around Mrs. Claxton, who sat—with that same bright interest, and silent enjoyment on her pale, serene face, which had first so much surprised and won upon him—listening to Nina's conversation with the stranger.

"It is very odd indeed, quite a little adventure," said Miss Davenal, carelessly pulling off her embroidered glove. "There is a little superstition connected with it, which is the most of my interest in the matter. I always thought it too heavy a ring for a lady's finger."

"I am very happy indeed that I am able to restore it to you," returned Nina, laughing in the simple fashion of children. "It was just by the merest accident, you know, that I chanced to catch the glitter of the setting. And it is queer enough that I should have happened to be there on that day. I hadn't been by the river before for weeks, and I dare say it will be months before I go again. And you say you were only spending a day in the place. It is very odd!"

"I think it is evident fate ordained a meeting," returned the beautiful Miss Davenal, shaking out the flounces of the black silk mantilla. "I am sure I am sensible of a potent attraction; I should like to know you better."

"With all my heart," answered Nina, frankly; and then she added, a little flush of colour stealing over her cheek, but withal with a dignity which was very becoming. "You can see for yourself that our circumstances are humble," and the hasty glance over the rich attire of her visitor finished the sentence her words left incomplete.

"But there is not better blood than ours in all the shire," spoke up Bella Claxton, hastily.

"One can see that," answered the visitor, dropping those long, inky fringes of her eyelid on the carmine cheek. "The true refinement of such a home as this cannot be bought with gold."

And Kent Forsay saw the scarlet lip tremble, even while it curled disdainfully over that word "gold," as if the young lady had no love for the potent alchemist of this glitter-loving world of ours.

"I am so thankful you saw the notice Nolan wrote. I am very glad indeed to give you back your ring," said Nina, returning to the subject which had commenced the conversation, and, as she spoke, she extended her hand towards Miss Davenal.

They were entwined together, for the moment, the little taper, work-pricked fingers of Nina, and those long, slender, gem-decked ones, of the elegant stranger, when Kent Forsay's eye caught sight of the ring which had been lost and restored.

Which held it, when its identity burst upon him, queenly, imperial, strangely fascinating Carmine Davenal, or true-hearted, loving, womanly Nina Claxton? That was a question he asked himself, again and again, for weeks afterwards. But there it was—Miss Davenal had slipped it upon her finger, by the time his astonishment allowed him to speak—the same antique setting, every stone and leaf of the mosaic the same, the shield with the clasped hands, a perfect, faithful copy!

"I beg your pardon, it is a peculiar ring. Will you allow me to look at it?" said Kent Forsay, and

in extending his own ungloved hand he exposed the counterpart.

"Why!" exclaimed Nina Claxton innocently, "it is just like yours. They are exactly alike."

"That was what I suspected," observed the young man, trying to steady his voice, and not unmindful of the swift, startled glance that came over the beautiful face of Miss Davenal, robbing the cheeks for a moment of their bloom, and wafting a hazy cloud into the slumberous depths of those large eyes.

She looked up into his face with a frightened, questioning, almost indignant glance, as she relinquished the ring, and then she dropped her eyelids, and stood silent, while the two were compared.

Nina and Bella were girlishly interested.

"What a queer coincidence! they are really alike. Take care! There now, Miss Davenal, how will you know which is yours?"

Miss Davenal, without looking at Kent Forsay, took them both into her hand.

"This is mine," said she, in a low, half-stifled voice, "beside the private mark there is a figure two. The other, your friend's, you perceive, is number one."

"How very extraordinary!" observed Bella Claxton languidly. "I had an idea there were no duplicates for such things."

Nina was silently looking from Kent Forsay to Miss Davenal, supposing that there was some secret understanding between them. Half mechanically, while under the momentary embarrassment of this consciousness, she took up a piece of embroidery which was lying in her work basket on the table at her mother's right hand, and set a stitch or two.

"Oh, what exquisite embroidery! Is it possible you have done all this?" exclaimed Miss Davenal.

"And many another like it," answered Nina, gaily.

Bella, with shame-flushed cheeks, hastened to interpose:

"Our Nina is a little nun in her fondness and skill with the needle."

"Her fondness for the proceeds rather," returned honest Nina, arching her neck with the only haughtiness she knew, that of sturdy uprightness and independence. "If you wish any embroidery done, Miss Davenal, I shall be very glad to try to please you."

"I should be enchanted, I am sure, to have such fairy stitching in my handkerchiefs. See what an ugly monogram that is, yet I forget what fabulous sum I paid for it," returned the lady, drawing forth a cobweb handkerchief and showing the initials of her name wrought in a sort of twining vine.

Bella drew away with an angry sparkle in her eye; Nina, smiling tranquilly, examined the embroidery with the interest of an expert.

"I am sure I can do better than that, though the pattern is good. May I ask how much you paid for it?"

Miss Davenal carelessly named the sum.

"Oh," said Nina, with a long-drawn sigh, "it is treble what I receive."

"You must be so good as to embroider a dozen for me," said Miss Davenal, promptly. "I shall be so delighted."

And as she turned to the window, bending over the flowers there, the lady said softly to herself:

"Dear old man! your blessing avails. This is some of His work which comes to my hands."

"But," said Nina, a little hesitatingly, "I understood you that you were only travelling through the place. If I work ever so industriously it will take a week for me to embroider a dozen."

"Oh, I dare say I shall remain a week," answered the elegant lady, with a careless shrug of her graceful shoulders. "It is all caprice, you know. If I am pleased with a place and enjoy myself, why there I remain, till I am tired of it."

Nina's blue eyes widened with innocent surprise.

"And your parents—do they leave everything to you?" she asked. A gravity that was almost sternness darkened the sparkling eye and beautiful face.

"I have no parents. I am all alone, free as the winds to act my own wild will," replied Miss Davenal. "Where I choose, I go, wandering like a gipsy over the whole land."

"Ah, how delightful, how fortunate! since you have the means to enjoy all of life's luxury and beauty," sighed Bella Claxton, enviously.

Their guest turned upon her fiercely.

"Never say that again, never think it! Did you hear what I said, I am alone, all alone in this world full of happy homes and loving hearts. Cannot you, from the midst of this loving circle, guess what dreary desolation, what frigid distress, drives me hither and thither, finding no happiness and no warmth anywhere, let me gild my surroundings as I may?"

Bella drew back, blushing a little with embarrassment rather than shame. Nina, with a sweet ingenuous smile, came to her rescue.

"Bella did not pause to think. It seems impossible to us, you see, to think that there can be any grief where one has youth and health like you, and such abundant means of gratifying your tastes. Well, a day! I suspect we have all our skeleton closets, and each thinks his own is more trying than any other. But you are right, Miss Davenal, a loving, happy home, be it ever so humble, is the sweetest of earthly possessions."

As she spoke, Nina's little hand stole softly to Nolan's clasp, and the other arm was thrown caressingly about Floy's shoulder, while the dove-like eyes, atoning for the powerlessness of the hands to embrace all, wandered lovingly from her mother's placid face to the curtained recess, behind which the helpless father dozed, and then came back, in sisterly pride, to Bella's statuesque form.

Carmine Davenal looked at her wistfully. "Oh," said she, with a vehemence which almost startled them. "Oh, if I could change with you."

"But surely you have overdrawn the picture," pursued Nina, gently. "Dear lady, already our hearts have all warmed to you. I am sure, wherever you go, there must be a circle of warm, admiring, attached friends. I cannot believe you are so entirely alone."

Miss Davenal smiled a little scornfully.

"Can I trust friends who crowd around in summer hours? Do we not need the winter's sweeping blasts to show us who will keep beside us, in our need and want? Besides, these very advantages, poor as they seem to me, of wealth and freedom, are but so much capital for the envious and evil-minded to sneer at. And they know," said she, her eye flashing indignantly, "they know I have no father or brother to resent my wrongs."

There was a moment's awkward silence, which Miss Davenal broke with a merry laugh. Her mood had changed. She turned towards them, gay, gracious, and with a winning familiarity of tone.

"Do you know how I managed it? You see, at first, when I came from school, and found myself so free and untrammelled, I was a little wild, that is, I was absurd. I thought just as you did, that I was to win friends. I was to be a queen in society, because I was able to put on costly robes and deck myself in jewels. Straightway I put myself into the whirlpool of what is called fashionable society. I was gay and happy for a little time, but I had my woman's dignity in my own keeping. I never once imperilled that jewel whose pure surface cannot bear a single flaw. Never once! in the sight of heaven I can say it! I kept my maiden hand clean and pure from the touch of any known contamination. I watched for myself, to see what prescribed bounds a woman must not cross. I was jealously on my guard with every gentleman who came near me. I only asked to be happy, to be friendly, to taste my share of the innocent pleasures my youth and means offered. I saw daughters of influential old men, sisters of irascible young ones, venturing upon questionable movements, foolish flirtations, overbold ventures, and no one lifted up an accusing voice, nor so much as pointed the finger. But my own self-respect kept me from following such examples. And yet, mark you, there was no lack of buzzing tongues wherever I moved. I learned it soon enough. Heaven pardon them! Some of them have such empty chaff given them for the feeding of their starved minds, that they turn to any mischief or folly which comes to hand, from pure weariness of their life's stupidity. But it was from women that the first notes were sounded. 'Who is she?' they asked, with raised eyebrows, pursing lips, and cunning eyes, but keeping fair words on the tongue. 'We must know who she is, before she comes into our immaculate set. Where are her friends, her parents, her guardians? Who gives her the jewels, which are a great deal purer water than Adeliza's, or Araminta's, or dear Seraphina's? It is a sign that there is something wrong, that the gentlemen turn away from our dear girls, and follow such an unknown person. Let us talk her down, and thrust her out!'"

The speaker's words were spoken swiftly, her eyes shone, her cheek glowed, and what superb scorn curled the scarlet lip!

"Ah!" ejaculated Nolan Claxton, "the wretches! If only I had been there!"

Miss Davenal turned, a soft, lambent smile playing across her face with wonderful effect.

"Thank you. I am wrong to withhold that there were some chivalrous souls who dashed in valiantly to the rescue. But what matter? I was more tormented by their eagerness in my service than by the slanderous tongues of my defamers. I had had enough of such pleasure. I disappeared suddenly from the scene. I gave myself up to a gipsyish love of travel. I took keen delight in discovering that I could really go alone from city to city, wandering where I chose. A strange adventure broke up the fancied security of this method. Now I am in the midst of a new fancy. I take my coachman and carriage and make long journeys, stopping where I am pleased, flying from what disturbs me. And that brings me to what I was going to tell in the commencement. How I have managed to outwit the busybodies. A little while ago I had occasion to procure a new maid. Such a queer creature answered my advertisement. 'What is your name?' asked I at the outset. 'Anything you please, miss,' was the electrifying reply. 'I was Julie at the place before, but they had another Julie at the last house, and so I was Ann there. You can name me what you like.' 'But haven't you a name of your own?' asked I, as soon as my laughter would allow of speech. 'Sure and I keep that for the middle name,' said she; 'you can put any name you please to it to suit yourself, marm.' Sure enough I could. Now that gave me a brilliant idea. I looked at the woman carefully. I talked with her, to test her capabilities, and discovered that there was really a stratum of common sense and ability underneath the rather stupid appearance. I got her story out of her. She had been badly used, and had not had fair opportunity to show her own worth. She had no relatives to annoy me. I considered a few moments, and closed the bargain. 'Well,' said I, 'you shall come into my service, and shall have your name from me. This is it—Aunt.' She looked at me rather doubtfully, and repeated it. 'Aunt?—that's a name I never heard of, marm.' 'I dare say; but I think it is a very nice name, nevertheless; your own is Eliza Brown; Aunt E. Brown, in future, if you please,' returned I, and then I went off again into an explosion of laughter. I sent her to a dressmaker, and made her into a very genteel-looking dowager. I gave her private lessons in grammar and arithmetic. Thank goodness, she could always write her name! And when you see her you will be quite astonished, I can assure you, at the very respectable appearance she makes. Now, you understand, I am triumphant. When people begin to wonder at my lonely, friendless condition, I call upon my Aunt in my sociable way, and she, responding, settles the question of my decency. A girl with an Aunt to *chaperone* her, you know, is quite another affair."

She looked around upon them, still laughing, and their gay young voices responded merrily.

Nevertheless there was a tear in the proud dark eye, as she turned to Bella.

"Don't envy me, Miss Claxton, who am so poor that I must buy an——aunt."

Somehow, still a little embarrassed, Bella drew the old harp towards her, and ran her lily fingers lightly over the strings.

"Ah, that is exactly what we want. It will exorcise all these evil, bitter thoughts," said Miss Davenal. "Sing, as well as play, I beg of you."

"Come and sit down by me, my dear," said a sweet, tender voice.

Miss Davenal looked over to the pale face with its sweet, motherly smile, and her lip quivered, but she went silently, and declining the chair, dropped lightly upon the faded footstool at Mrs. Claxton's feet. The latter laid her thin hands lightly upon the graceful shoulders. Something in the act was so like a benediction, that Carmine Davenal could not refrain from turning and kissing the delicate transparent fingers.

Bella, meanwhile, began her song. Nolan and Nina joined in the chorus, and, presently, Kent Forsay chimed in his deep bass. Miss Davenal waited until the last verse, before she allowed them to discover that she possessed a magnificent contralto voice.

"What an admirable quartette!" exclaimed Kent Forsay, "what delightful evenings we might have."

"Delightful, indeed," echoed the others, but Miss Davenal was silent. Yet no one believed she was indifferent, for they could see that her eyes were full of tears.

She rose presently, with one of those rare, sorrowful smiles of hers.

"You see how dangerous it is to harbour me. Already I have forgotten that I have only a business call here. But I shall cling to that excuse, if you will allow me, and come again. If I had ever known a home, I should say that I felt at home here, as I have never done elsewhere."

"We shall only be too much honoured, and our great pleasure in your visits I am certain you can read for yourself," answered Mrs. Claxton, with her benign smile.

"And I shall bring the handkerchiefs, and we will consult about the pattern," continued Miss Davenal, eagerly, looking appealingly at Nina, who smiled her acquiescence.

"Ah, then it is settled. I shall stay a little while in the town, and I shall come here as often as you will allow me. I shall send for Aunt, and you shall make her acquaintance, with a due understanding of her antecedents. And now—good day!"

She bowed to all, lingered a moment beside Nina, but was at the door before the latter discovered that, in taking her hand, she had slipped upon her finger a hoop of gold set with a single pearl.

They saw her flitting lightly to her carriage, and in a moment after heard the wheels rolling away.

"What an exceedingly agreeable person!" exclaimed Bella, "and yet how odd."

"An angel of beauty and grace," muttered Nolan.

"A sweet girl," echoed Mrs. Claxton.

Nina said nothing. She was twisting the ring to and fro upon her finger, but Kent Forsay knew when the timid, inquiring glance searched over his face.

"She has a fine voice," he said, quietly. "It is an odd coincidence that she possessed a ring like mine."

"You have never met with her before," observed Nina, and there was more inquiry than assertion in the tone.

"Certainly not," was the prompt reply.

And yet, somehow, when he took his leave he had an undefined impression that Nina Claxton doubted if he had quite told the truth. There was this question unsettled even for him. Which held the mosaic ring when he saw it first?

CHAPTER XI.

Moodily, sullenly,
Watching the tide,
Still the black angel
Stands at his side.

VARIMONT was no favourite in the town. His manners were dark and chilling, and people distrusted him. His movements, moreover, were eccentric and mysterious. As often as once a month he left town, and was absent, sometimes a week, sometimes ten days, and again not more than one or two days, but no one ever knew where he went, or what object called him away. His connection with Madame Lambert likewise contributed to his unpopularity. The honest townspeople were not particularly shrewd, but they had keen enough wits to understand that the dark faced foreigner was a secret spy in the service of the imperious mistress of the factory village, and landholder of half their homes, and they gave to him something of the vague awe and distrust with which their superstitious fancies invested her.

Varimont, on his part, had no disposition to encourage familiarity, being well aware how troublesome officious curiosity might become. He took good care to impress them with a due sense of his importance, and farther than that allowed no investigation into his affairs. His connection with the fruit shop was a mere sinecure, as every one could see, but though there were often curious eyes on the watch, only one person had detected the secret of Madame Lambert's basket of oranges, and that person, it is needless to say, was Mat Rigby, and he was still at a loss to explain half the strange appearances he had discovered.

But Varimont, haughty and slightly overbearing as he was in his demeanour before the townspeople, had his own peculiar trials and alarms. One such occurred to him the very afternoon that Miss Davenal spent in procuring handkerchiefs to submit to her new friend's dexterous embroidery. He had watched the graceful imperial figure passing down the street with an admiring eye, though there was a cold sneer on his lip. He stood at the window of the fruit shop, carelessly leaning against the wall, snapping his fingers in idle sport, waiting as quietly as might be for the lady's return. He saw some half a dozen business men pass in a group on their way to their several shops. Then two or three ladies, and a poor charwoman. The same indifferent expression was on his face, and only idle, listless glances were given to the group of children, who came flocking along, until he discovered the object which had attracted their interest and attention, when a sort of shudder passed over his face. But it was only a hand-organ borne on the stout shoulders of some poor wanderer. Varimont could only see his slouched cap, and the shock of coarse, black hair under it, so it was not the identity of the man which made him draw back with a nervous contraction of the eyebrows, and stand there in the shade of the window, stealing furtive glances outwards, like one afraid, and yet fascinated by the sight.

Behind the man trudged a woman, stout armed, stunted in figure, with square shoulders, and a head set firmly, and carried as haughtily erect as that of some lithe young Indian princess. She wore a short, scant skirt of some stout woollen cloth of bright blue, trimmed with stripes of black velvet, put on like those of a *virandière*, with gilt buttons at the ends. Her jacket was of scarlet silk, highly trimmed with gold lace, and on her head she wore a wide-brimmed straw hat, from under which fell long black braids tied with red and blue ribbons. She carried a tambourine in a sort of indolent, disdainful fashion, and followed behind the organ with slow and lagging steps.

The moment Varimont caught sight of the woman's form, he started away from the window with an instinctive movement of alarm and dread. A moment after he began piling up baskets and boxes in the window, to make a sort of screen for him, and, standing behind them, he watched with feverish eagerness, to obtain a glimpse of the woman's face, which had not yet been turned towards him, taking care to hide himself likewise from the scrutiny of the attendant within.

The organ man had been relieving his back of its heavy load, and now set it up, throwing back the lid, to expose to the delighted eyes of his little audience the dancing puppets, he began to turn the crank, upon which the woman also moved to his side and raised her tambourine. This movement brought to Varimont the desired view. The dark, fierce face, with its gloomy black eyes, and grim, set lips, its long tinkling gold eardrops swinging against the swarthy cheek was exposed fully to his observation. If the man had received a heavy blow he could not have looked more shocked and disturbed. He looked around towards the inner door as though with an idea of seeking refuge there, made a step towards it, then he turned back, and adding one more box to the pile already before him, peered out again.

The woman was following the music of the organ, with her tambourine, her movements slow and dignified, and though not lacking heartiness, still somehow disdainful, and entirely unlike the appearance of her class. Varimont's eye was expressive of horror, while his lips curled away from his white teeth in deadly hatred, but he did not lose a single movement or look of hers.

The crowd about the pair had increased. The jubilant little ones made an inner circle, and behind them gathered the neighbouring clerks and shopkeepers, willing to waste a few idle moments in this diversion. The dark-faced woman smiled contemptuously when the music ended, the organ-grinder pulled open his loose cloak, and allowed a monkey which had been clinging there, to skip nimbly to the ground, and, pulling off his feathered cap, it went nimbly from one to another, bowing in the most approved courtier-like style, whenever it received a penny into the cap. It was a wonderfully intelligent little animal, and its quaint dress, droll gestures, and comical movements provoked shouts of laughter from the crowd.

The little velvet cap was soon filled with pennies, so that its weight required both little paws to hold it up, and the monkey went creeping up to its master, nodding with such a knowing look, that half the little urchins, watching with gaping mouths and staring eyes, longed to seize and take possession of him. He leaped down nimbly from the box, after delivering up his booty, and as the man returned to his organ, grinding out the last air as a sort of thank-offering, the little creature skipped along towards the woman, and, stopping before her, looked up wistfully into her face.

She uttered some Italian word of caressing, and taking it as an affirmative answer to its dumb questioning, the monkey sprang up upon her shoulder.

She stroked the little, agile paws, and smiled, muttering in her native language:

"It is no use, Jocko, is it? you have not found him yet. But be sure, go and hunt them all over, Jocko."

Caressing him once again, she put him down, and took out the tambourine from under her arm. The sagacious little creature went skipping lightly along the row of amused spectators, receiving candy and nuts with his droll little bow of thanks, and thrusting them all into the little pocket of his soldier coat, except when it was varied by the mischief of some of the bystanders, who substituted pebbles for nuts; then Jocko raised a great shout of laughter by trying them with his teeth, and flinging them down upon the ground with an angry little chatter. After he had visited the whole line, he came to the door of the fruit shop. Probably his keen scent detected the goodly store of dainties congregated there, and it was this which first attracted him to enter. At all events, he hopped over the threshold, and, eyeing the interior in his knowing way, went slowly along, turning his head from side to side. Looking around stealthily, he stretched out his greedy little paw towards a basket of nuts, but, in the very act, he paused, lifted his head, and seemed sniffing some subtle scent in the direction of the window where Varimont was standing, still watching the organ-grinder and his companion.

Instantaneously, a great change came over the little creature. He ran shrieking and chattering, making his little paws fly in fierce gesticulation, and leaping upon the counter, confronted Varimont.

Had it been an imp from the fabled regions of Pluto's realm, or an accusing demon rising up beside him, the man's face could not have revealed more abject terror or wilder consternation, as Jocko's head was thrust close to his, over the baskets on the counter.

He retreated a step, then he came back, and, with an oath, struck the poor animal a blow which knocked him from the counter.

Jabbering and chattering in a fierce, wild tone, and trembling in every limb, Jocko ran out, and leaped into the woman's arms. The moment she was aware of the little animal's excitement, the latter turned, looking around her with fierce, questioning eyes, her whole face flaming out of its apathy and coldness into a wild grandeur which transformed it, if not into positive beauty, into a very near approach to it.

"Where, Jocko, *carissima*, where?" demanded she.

The little creature nestled closer, trembling violently and beginning to chatter again. She patted him kindly, but spoke in a voice of authority.

"Go, Jocko, go. Show him to me!"

Jocko slipped down, and went slowly and reluctantly again to the shop door, where he stood whimpering and looking back. Her fierce strides brought her there in a moment, and she walked in fearlessly. Varimont had no possible way of escape, for he had not detected the meaning of the monkey's errand. He stood motionless, his face towards the window, its pallor more perceptible through the dark skin by the ghastly, yellow tinge it imparted. How devoutly he hoped that the attendant who was opening a box of oranges in the rear, would come forward and drive her out! He knew very well how often his orders had been thus executed, and could have ground his teeth with rage that this one example, for whose sake alone all the others had established the precedent, should be neglected. He could have stamped and raved, but he dared not. He would have hushed his very breathing had it been possible, he had such a shivering, deadly dread that the tambourine woman should spy him out, come there to his side, and confront him with those flaming eyes of hers.

She had gone in, and stood looking towards the man in the rear, who was pulling off the papers from the oranges, kneeling down by the basket, with his back towards them.

Varimont comprehended the situation, for, despite his abject terror, he was still quick-witted and cunning.

She would go on still farther, to get a better glimpse of the man, to make certain that he was a stranger. Between him and where she would go, at the end of the counter, was a trap-door opening into the storage cellar. With steps as noiseless as a cat's he crept towards it, seized the handle, and steadily, but cautiously, lifted the door upwards. One foot was already on the stair, he made sure that he was to escape successfully, when the monkey with a shrill cry of rage leaped towards him.

Varimont bounded forward, the trap-door fell heavily and covered him, but the woman had turned, and had caught a glimpse of his face as he disappeared. She rushed back with a passionate anathema on her lips, and bent down, as if to lift the door, but some sudden thought checked her. She only shook her clenched fist at the floor through which Varimont had vanished, caught up the monkey, who was still cowering and trembling, and walked swiftly out of the shop. Her companion had shouldered his organ, and was looking around for her.

"We are here, Baptiste; Jocko and I are here, and we have done a better day's work than your organ. Good Jocko! good Jocko! I knew the time would come you would scent him out. Jocko never forgets a friend or a foe, do you, Jocko?"

The man raised his heavy eyes, struck dumb by the conviction which her voice in its trembling triumph forced upon him. She was staring around the faces still watching them curiously, and finding one which evidently pleased her, she turned towards it. But the organ-grinder had recovered his voice, and laid a detaining hand on her shoulder.

"You don't mean, Guaicenti, that you have found him?—that our search is ended?"

"What else should I mean, stupid Baptiste? What other event could fire my heart with such fierce joy? Why have we wandered far and wide over this country, except to track and discover him? Jocko has ferreted him out, as I told you he would. Poor little Jocko, he is trembling still; but I, oh, how happy I am! He need not think to hide from me. Jocko and I can track him now; we will haunt him, we will hunt him down. We will taste the sweets of vengeance. Do you think I need farther proof of his guilt than that he ran like a coward from the sight of us? He is here! Baptiste, find a place for us to stay, for here we shall remain until our end is accomplished."

"The Saints send it may be soon! We shall spend all our hard earnings if we dally," whispered Baptiste.

Her lip curled with haughty scorn. "And what is money? I could coin my heart's blood, and yet pour it forth like water in such a cause. Begone, Baptiste, this is my errand; I engaged in it; the whole expedition and your miserly greediness shall not hinder its success. If it need money, I shall take it. Why else have I come? For what other purpose did I take you?"

Baptiste quailed beneath the fiery glance, and, shouldering his organ, took a few steps forward. This conversation had been in Italian, and only a few of the crowd, attracted by the woman's fierce looks, remained looking on in idle curiosity.

Guaicenti singled out one of these, and approaching him with a grave smile, said in tolerable English, while she dropped a curtsey:

"My good sir, will you give me the answers to a few questions I wish to ask? I do not mean to be intrusive, and I will pay you in my poor way, as I am able."

The man looked at her in some surprise, but replied, good-humouredly:

"Ask away; it don't cost much to give a civil reply."

"There was a man in the shop there;" she pointed her hand towards the fruiterer's, and her lip curled. "He was there just now, and I saw him as he was running away from me. He is my countryman, and I am interested in him. He has a face dark, like his," and she pointed towards the organ-grinder, who stood at a little distance, watching her uneasily, "but yet not like his either, for it is like a fox's, crafty and evil in its expression. I saw him there in the shop yonder. Do you recognize the man? And does he belong there?"

"It is Varimont she means, sure enough. Well, if that isn't odd," exclaimed the man, who happened to be a neighbour's assistant.

"Varimont—Varimont," repeated the woman in a bewildered tone, "that is not his name."

"But that is the name of the dark-faced man who belongs to the fruiterer's shop," persisted the man, eagerly, "and you've just described him. He's like a fox, for all the world, though he takes the manners of a lion, and would make us think he is somebody of great account."

The woman laid her hand upon his arm. "Will you help me to a good sight of him, so that I may be sure?"

"Why not?" returned the man, jocosely, "come in and treat me to a box of figs, and then we shall be sure."

She laughed scornfully.

"He dived through a hole in the floor at the very sight of me; you need not think he will show himself again while I am in the street."

"You don't say so. You know something against him then. And he holds his head so high! Come, tell us all about it."

"Can you give us a place to sleep in to-night?" she asked, eagerly, putting her hand into her pocket, and drawing it out again with several silver pieces shining on the palm.

"I don't know but I can, I'll talk with my dame, and see what she says," responded the man, his curiosity strongly excited. "Come down this side street, and we'll soon find out."

Guaicenti turned to Baptiste, beckoning with her finger, and in a moment more all three were passing down the street. As fate would have it, Varimont, having just made his exit from the rear of his shop, came hurrying into that very street. There was no possibility of retreat from their observation, when he became aware of the approach of the little party, though he stopped abruptly, and looked around him appealingly.

Guaicenti's face flashed over again with that same fierce glow.

"That is he, that is he," she cried; "speak quick, is that your Varimont?"

"It is he, sure enough," answered the man.

She darted away from them, and ran swiftly along, holding the struggling monkey in her arms. Though Varimont did his best to get away from her, she gained his side, and shouted exultantly in her own tongue:

"Ho, ho! Lucio, brave Lucio, why do you run away from me? Surely you ought to have a welcome word for a countrywoman, and an old friend," she vociferated.

Varimont, though deadly pale, endeavoured to assume an appearance of composure, and innocent astonishment. He held out his hands as if to ward her off, and answered in English:

"I do not understand your talk, good woman, it is all Greek to me. I do not know you at all."

She laughed again shrilly, as she replied in English:

"You do not know me? Ah, well, time makes changes in us all. Poor Guaicenti has not had so happy a past that it could keep away the wrinkles. No doubt you find me old and faded. Here is one, however, who remains the same. Come, Jocko, tell your old acquaintance, Lucio, to look at you, and see if you have changed since he saw you last! Look at him, Jocko, and ask him if he recalls, as you do, the last time you two met."

She held the monkey up close to Varimont's face. The little creature was evidently half beside himself with terror, and struggled violently to escape, but finding it impossible, or else emboldened by his friend's presence, he suddenly fell into a paroxysm of rage, and darted at the man's throat, snapping his white teeth together viciously.

"How now, Lucio? one would think he recalled unpleasant memories with your presence. Do you see the scar there on the breast? Can you guess how poor Jocko came by such a wound as that was? Tell me, Lucio, have you any idea where Jocko lost his old friend?"

Varimont had retreated a step, deadly pale, and biting fiercely at his lip. Once he raised his hands quickly, as if to throttle the monkey, then he cast a hasty glance around the street, and perceiving the approach of those who knew him, he flung down a silver coin upon the ground, saying hurriedly:

"I know not the meaning of your wild talk. If you want money, take it, and be out of my way. Your talk is like the gibberish of the monkey. Neither have any meaning for me."

"That is as false as your craven soul, Lucio Bazini. Well enough do you understand the meaning of both. Beware! the avenger is on your track! Answer me, where is your kind and generous friend? where is Jocko's master, and why does the poor creature tremble with fear and rage at your very presence?"

Varimont, his eye flashing with deadly anger, raised his arm, to thrust her aside, but at that moment Jocko, with a shrill cry, leaped upon him. Before Varimont could shake him off, his sharp teeth were buried in his flesh. The blood was streaming down his neck when he dashed the little creature fiercely to the ground, and would have stamped him down, but that Guaicenti rushed forward and caught him in her arms.

"Blood for blood!" said she, wildly. "Lucio Bazini, do not think you can hide from us? We are on your track! Jocko and I are Matteo's avengers! We shall hunt you down!"

"Curses upon you both!" ejaculated Varimont, and dashed by them, as the organ-grinder and his guide arrived upon the spot.

The woman stood still, looking after the figure which was making such a hurried retreat, her black eyebrows drawn into a malignant scowl, the hands clenched, the teeth leaving their imprint upon the grim set lip.

Jocko, whimpering and cowering, crept again into her arms. She hugged him closely, and a quiver went over her fierce countenance.

"Oh, Matteo, Matteo, *carissima!* only a little longer, and you shall be avenged. I will not lose the track again. I will follow him to the ends of the earth," she murmured, and stood upright, staring at vacancy.

"Come on," said Baptiste, touching her softly. "The good man is waiting. He says this fellow has power here, and may find a way to hinder our free passage through the town. Let us get out of his way."

She laughed contemptuously.

"No, he will not hinder us. It is the last thing he will do, to call the law's attention to Jocko and me,—the last thing, isn't it, Jocko? Nevertheless, we will go, because we have our own plans, haven't we, Jocko?"

And she followed behind them, and the wanderers found shelter that night, but the neighbour's assistant did not obtain the information he desired. Guaicenti kept her own counsel.

(To be continued.)

SCIENCE.

The fact has been satisfactorily demonstrated at the Shoeburyness trials, that a cannon ball will penetrate a target with much greater ease with a range of 200 yards than with a range of 70 yards. The supposed explanation for this fact is that the shot "wobbles" a little on leaving the gun, and requires time, and consequently space, to settle down to a steady whirl. The fact that the holes made at 70 yards are larger than those made at 200 yards, supports this hypothesis.

The Chemical Action of Light.—Professor Roscoe, F.R.S., has devised some very curious and interesting lecture experiments illustrative of the action of the chemical rays upon certain descriptions of common matter, one of which is the following:—A bulb of very thin glass, about the size of a hen's egg, he fills in the dark, or by the aid of a yellow light, with a mixture of pure hydrogen and chlorine gases, the gases being produced by the decomposition of hydrochloric acid by the voltaic current. The room being darkened, the bulb, thus prepared, is placed in a four-sided lantern provided with red and blue glasses. Now having covered with a cloth all the sides of the lantern except the one fitted with red glass, the lecturer places a long-stoppered glass jar filled with nitric oxide and bisulphide of carbon vapour in front of the exposed side, and on applying a burning match to its mouth a brilliant flash of pale blue light, rich in chemical rays, is the result. But as red glass absorbs such rays, none can get through to the glass bulb which is fixed in the lantern. A second jar of the mixed vapours is next fired in front of the lantern's side fitted with blue glass, and as the latter transmits the chemical rays, the union of the hydrogen and chlorine gases is the result, and the bulb is burst in the explosion which follows.

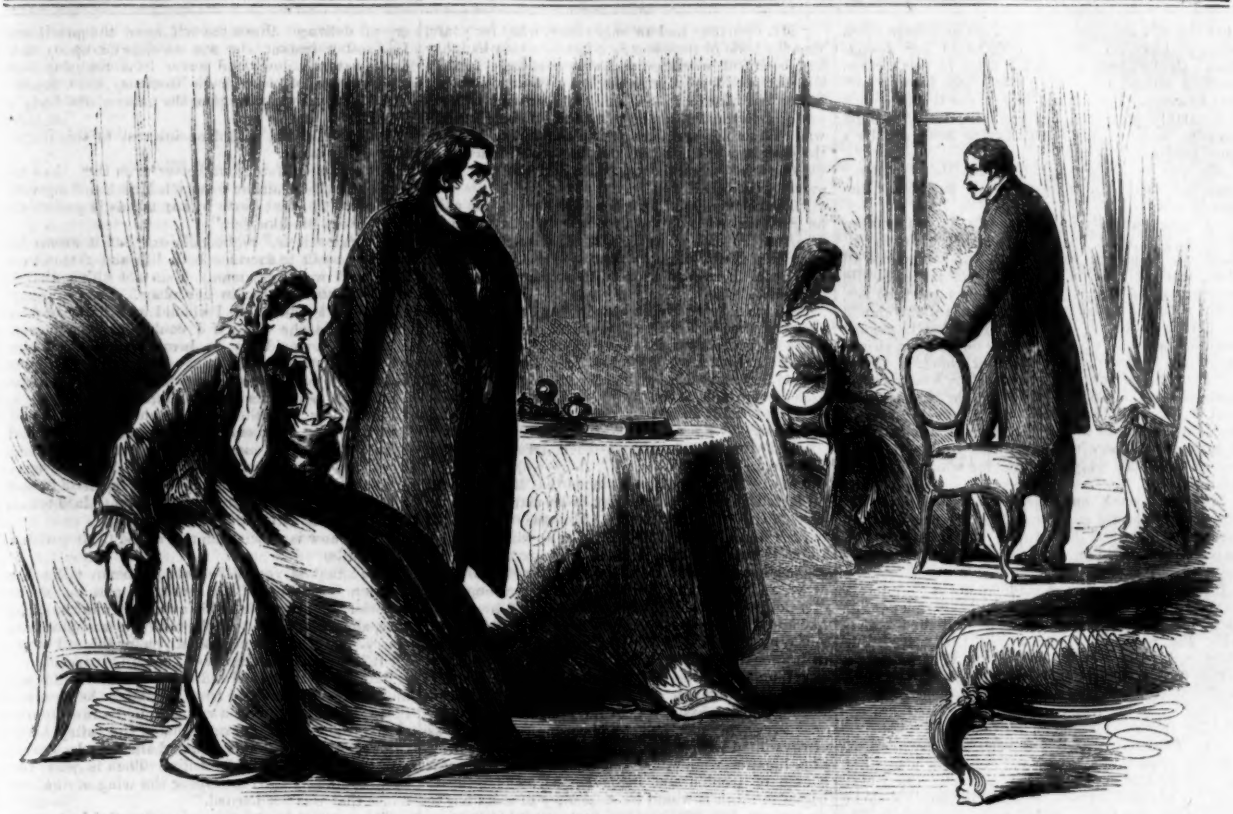
CURIOSITIES OF SOUND.

Among the things not generally known, Dr. Tyndall informs us that sound resembles light, in being susceptible of refraction. The refraction of a luminous beam by a lens is a consequence of the retardation suffered by the light in passing through the glass. Sound may be similarly refracted by causing it to pass through a lens which retards its motion. Such a lens is formed when we fill a thin balloon with some gas heavier than air. As an example, the professor takes a collodion balloon filled with carbonic acid gas, the envelope being so thin as to yield readily to the pulses which strike against it, transmitting them to the gas inside. He then hangs up his watch close to the lens, and then, at a distance of four or five feet on the other side of the lens, he listens, assisting his ear with a glass funnel, which acts as an ear trumpet. By moving his head about he soon discovers a position in which the ticking of the watch is particularly loud. This, in fact, is the focus of the lens. If he moves his ear away from this focus, the intensity of the sound decreases. If, when his ear is at the focus, the balloon be removed, the ticks are enfeebled; on replacing the balloon their force is restored. The lens enables him to hear the ticks distinctly when they are perfectly inaudible to the unaided ear. The sound lens magnifies small sounds, as the glass lens magnifies minute objects. Thin india-rubber balloons form excellent sound lens.

The moderate speed of sound in air is the cause of a number of curious facts which ignorant people might take for contradictions. For instance, if a row of soldiers form a circle and discharge their pieces all at the same time, the sound will be heard as a single discharge by a person occupying the centre of the circle. But if the men form a straight row, and if the observer stand at one end of the row, the simultaneous discharge of the men's pieces will be prolonged to a kind of roar. A company of soldiers marching to music along a road, cannot march to time together, for the notes do not reach those in front and those behind simultaneously.

The velocity of sound in water is more than four times its velocity in air. The velocity of sound in iron is seventeen times its velocity in air. The difference of velocity in iron and in air may be illustrated by the following instructive experiment: Choose a long bar of iron, and let an assistant strike the bar at one end, while the ear of the observer is held close to the bar at a considerable distance. Two sounds will reach the ear in succession; the first being transmitted through the iron, and the second through the air. This effect was observed by M. Biot, in his experiments on the iron water-pipes of Paris.

Artificial Ivory.—Use the following ingredients, in about the proportions named, by weight: Shellac 8 parts, asbestos 7 parts, kaolin 2½ parts, camphor ½ part. To these add the desired colouring matter. For light colours, sufficient white lead or similar pigment (about two ounces), to make the compound a white ivory colour, and this may be tinted almost any desired hue, but for dark colours a less proportion of white may be employed, or it may be omitted. The compound is designed to imitate ivory, and is adapted to the manufacture of any article that can be formed by pressure while in a heated, plastic state; for instance, billiard balls, numbers, counters, checks, paper cutters, ornamental fancy articles, and, in dentistry, may be used for the filling of teeth, for artificial gum-work, and for plates, as the said composition may be coloured of almost any hue. The composition employed is to be heated and mixed in the most thorough manner. For this purpose mix the ingredients, after they have been finely ground or pulverized, and in preference employ a pan heated by steam at a temperature of about 240 deg. to 280 deg. Fah., and then thoroughly mix or grind the substances together between heated rollers.



[A FATHER'S DOUBTS.]

MICHELDEVER.

CHAPTER IX.

"Since you are so confident of your father's approbation, there is little chance that anyone will come between you. Mrs. Courtnay will scarcely object to so advantageous a settlement for her godchild, and she is the only one to be consulted beside myself. I shall not live to witness the happiness I trust you will both find in your union; and after I am gone she will control the actions of Claire."

"Thank you, sir—but why do you say that you will not live? You look strong and well—good for many years of life."

"Yet they will not be granted to me—let that suffice. I cannot explain myself more fully, for you would be sceptical as to the reality of the presentiment that foreshadows my fate. But if I am denied the privilege of watching over my child here, I will do it from that higher sphere, to which I must soon go, and if you are untrue to her, if you use your power over her unkindly, I will torment you myself, or if that be not permitted, I will cause some earthly influence to avenge her wrongs. Remember this, for I am deeply in earnest."

Thorne stared at him for a moment, and then laughing lightly, replied:

"I scarcely suspected you of such fantastic notions, sir. As to treating Claire badly, that is an impossibility, you know."

But the speaker was, at heart, not ill-pleased with the suggestion that the troublesome father might be removed by some sudden stroke of fate, and Claire left without a protector who had the right to interfere in her affairs.

Cost what it would to himself or to her, Walter Thorne had determined to marry her at the earliest possible moment, and if M. Lapierre were only out of the way, he felt assured that he could mould the mind of the loving, trusting child to suit himself. He speculated vaguely about the future; wondering what it would bring to them; but he was resolved to improve the present, without permitting any inconvenient scruples to lie in his way. All must come right, and if it did not—well, then it would be time enough to reflect on the best means of extricating himself from the difficulties that might beset his path.

Selfish and reckless, he ignored the ties that bound him to his betrothed, and was ready to rush into new ones, which he might find himself as anxious to abjure in the time to come. Thorne readily persuaded himself that his father would not long refuse his forgiveness, when once the marriage was irrevocably made, but if he should prove obdurate, the young man never asked himself what his own course would be.

His meditations were interrupted by the return of the hostess, who invited them into the library, to look over some splendidly illustrated books which he was anxious to see. The library was a pleasant room, with large windows looking out over the broken country that lay between the Grange and the dilapidated house inhabited by M. Lapierre, with abrupt cliffs rising in the background, over which a tiny thread of water now flowed.

The windows had deep recesses in front of them; Claire sat down in one of these, and looked with a thrill of terror and thankfulness towards the distant spot on which her lover had encountered such perils, and, as she thought, had so heroically battled through them. The books had little interest for her, for she had been accustomed to them from childhood, and in her present mood she preferred dreaming her own sweet dream to all the talk on art going on so near her. She seemed to have suddenly stepped from childhood into womanhood; and young as she was, she began to feel that her destiny for life was settled, so far as her own feelings were concerned. This man, who two weeks before was unknown to her, had appeared in his youth, beauty and power, and made himself master of her fate, almost without a struggle on her part to escape the net he was spreading around her.

She felt that she was his utterly and entirely; that she would bow to his behests as the veriest slave, and have no will but that of the autocrat she had so blindly chosen. Her love for her father, which had hitherto filled her life, was henceforth a secondary feeling, though she reproached herself that it should be so. But some powerful magnetic attraction seemed to draw her towards her fate, and in her blind madness she was ready to say,

I know not, I ask not if guilt's in that heart,
I but know that I love thee, whatever thou art.

Claire was too young and trusting to dream of treachery—to imagine that her life might be wrecked at the outset, by the idol she had set up in her heart of hearts, to worship as something superior to all other creatures of mortal mould. All the fantasy of an imaginative mind was brought into play, to gift her lover with every noble attribute of humanity, and even a good and true man could scarcely have satisfied the ideal of her overwrought fancy.

How far below it this one must fall when he stands before her in his true colours; treacherous, false—seeking self-preservation at any cost to her; leaving her to be swept down by the tide of life, to be bruised, perhaps crushed, by the obstacles he had recklessly placed in her path. Ah! if the curtain could have been lifted, and that sad picture portrayed, how shudderingly would she have recoiled from the precipice over which she was hovering.

Thorne soon came, and sat down beside her in the wide window seat, leaving Mrs. Courtnay and her father together. Julia was playing with a favourite old dog, who was permitted to come into the house, and the opportunity of a *tête-à-tête* was afforded them. The Frenchman looked after the young man, and gravely shaking his head, said:

"It is impossible to keep them apart, and he is apparently so frank and true, that I scarcely know if it would be well for me to attempt doing so."

"We have both done the best we could," replied Mrs. Courtnay, "and he really seems so much in earnest that I scarcely know what to say. If all Mr. Thorne says of himself be true, the future of Claire seems a fair one; but they must not marry immediately. Should your sad presentiment be realized, I will take Claire under my own charge, and remove her with me to France in the spring, for it is my fixed intention to go thither as soon as my son graduates and can accompany me."

The face of M. Lapierre brightened, and he eagerly replied:

"That will be best. Yes—when I am gone, take her to France. Keep her from this imperious lover till she is old enough to understand herself, and to know if he be the one best suited to her of all the world. At times I have a chilling doubt of it. Something seems to warn me that it will not be well with my darling if she be given over to him entirely. But I may wrong him, for he seems good and noble, and—and he is very much in love with her."

"Of the last there cannot be a doubt; sudden passions, however, often die out as rapidly as they are kindled, and I wish to test the strength of this. Two years' probation will suffice for that, and if Mr. Thorne should prove fickle, Claire is too young to be permanently affected by it. I promise you that your little girl shall be as carefully looked after as if she were my own daughter. and in one sense she is, for I have promised before heaven to be a guide and protector to her."

"Thanks, dear and true friend, for your thoughtful kindness. It lifts from my heart a heavy weight. Claire may need all that you can do for her—oh! never desert her! Be her faults what they may, say that you will stand by her, should all others fail her. Tell me that you will, for something whispers me

that she will need you, and the time may come when she will have no other to look to in her desolation. Heaven help me! but I seem to see a cloud settling around my darling's fate that I am powerless to avert. I shall not live to see it close upon her earthly prospects, but you will, and you must promise me to stretch forth a saving hand, and be a good providence to her."

He was so deeply agitated that Mrs. Courtnay regarded him with compassionate surprise. She gently said:

"If you can really foresee events, as you so often declare, you must be a sad prophet of evil, M. Lapierre. I pledge you my word that I will do all that is possible to render the life of my god-child prosperous and happy. If misfortunes overtake her, I will not turn my back upon her, even if she should be herself to blame. I assure you that in me she possesses a friend who will never forsake her, so cast your fears to the wind, my dear old friend."

"I will do so from this moment; my heart is most grateful for this assurance, for I can rely on you. Ah! if I could only live to watch over her myself, but that I know is impossible. All now left me is, to make my peace with heaven and prepare to sever myself from the only creature for whom I would wish to live."

His head sunk on his breast, and he seemed absorbed in painful emotion. Mrs. Courtnay said no more, for she hoped this strange hallucination would pass away, for M. Lapierre seemed to be in the enjoyment of perfect health.

She took up a book and made an effort to interest herself in its pages, but her thoughts wandered far away to her young son, a youth of brilliant promise, who, she was aware, had loved Claire from his childhood. The mother knew that it would be a severe trial to Andrew to give up his early playmate to this stranger, yet if the truth must be told, she was not sorry that the two would now be separated, without any interference on her own part.

Mrs. Courtnay was not a very worldly woman, and she possessed a tender and generous heart; but she was ambitious for her boy, and she knew that with his advantages of person and fortune he could select a wife far better suited to his position in life than the lovely daughter of M. Lapierre. She wished Andrew to rise in the world, and she believed that he possessed the capacity and energy to become a leading spirit in his native land, if he were left free to walk in the path she had marked out for him. She wished him to spend two years at a foreign university, travel through the most interesting portions of Europe, and then return to England to enter political life.

Such was the future Mrs. Courtnay had sketched for her fiery and rather unmanageable son, and she believed an early marriage would interfere with it; therefore it was better for all concerned, that Walter Thorne should have come to the valley to bear Claire away from her boy lover. She had offered to take the young girl to France with her, but she intended to place her in a boarding-school, where she would be secluded from society, and Andrew would go to Germany, so they would not be thrown together after the voyage was over.

While Mrs Courtnay thus settled her plans in her own mind, the two who sat in the window enjoyed an uninterrupted *tête-à-tête*. A sudden shyness seemed to have fallen on Claire, and her soft eyes fell before the ardent glance that rested on her. Thorne kept to the letter of his promise to her father. He did not utter words of love, but every expression of his mobile face, every intonation of his flexible voice, spoke it more eloquently than real language, and the fair creature, who understood and responded to these demonstrations, seemed floating on a sea of bliss, over which the sun of her destiny seemed to be rising in unclouded splendour.

For some moments both had been silent, when Thorne pointed to the distant cliffs, and said:

"What a magnificent view this window commands! I must really make a sketch of it before I leave the valley. At this distance, Gleurose—(the fanciful name he had himself bestowed on the ruined home of M. Lapierre)—looks like a pile of ivy-crowned ruins. The river, spanned by the rustic bridge, and the dark background made by the cedar-crowned cliffs, with the Lady's Tarn below, are fine accessories to the picture. By the way, can you tell me why that name has been given to the dark pool that was so near swallowing me up?"

"It is a sad story," replied Claire, "and one that I am not sure Mrs. Courtnay would like me to tell."

"Why not?—she need not know that you have spoken of it. Pray, be good, and satisfy my curiosity, for I wish more than ever to learn the romance connected with the spot."

Of course Claire obeyed, for she could refuse nothing to the man who had made himself master of her heart and life. In a guarded voice she began:

"Mr. Courtnay had an only sister, who, for years, was the belle of the county. She was a very haughty and beautiful woman, but by some strange fatality she became deeply attached to a young man her father had taken into his family as secretary to himself and steward of his large estate. Young Randall was of humble parentage, and of course far beneath the daughter of the house, but he availed himself of the encouragement she gave him, and the two were secretly betrothed.

"I dare say he did love her in his way, but what he gave was no fair return for what was lavished on him, as the end proved. Old Mr. Courtnay discovered a plan for an elopement just as it was matured, and there was a dreadful scene, as you may imagine.

"He locked up his daughter in her own room, and then, in place of reviling and driving off her lover, as most fathers would have done, he took what seemed to him a wiser course. He understood the person he had to deal with, and he offered Randall a handsome sum if he would leave the valley for ever, and hold no farther communication with his daughter."

"Did the craven accept such terms?" asked Thorne, indignantly.

"Yes—when finally convinced that he would get no fortune with Miss Courtnay, if he married her, he accepted the father's terms. He was too poor to burden himself with a fine lady for a wife, with nothing to support her; that was his excuse for deserting her; so he took the money offered him, went away, and was never heard from again, though old Mr. Courtnay would gladly have recalled him, if he had known where he was to be found."

"Why was that? Did the young lady pine away in 'green and yellow melancholy?'"

"Worse than that—she lost her reason, and finally became so dangerous that she was kept in close confinement in the east wing of the house. The family was a very gay one, and the house in those days was always filled with company. Of course the presence of a lunatic, who was often violent, was a great source of trouble and inconvenience. The father began to think it would be necessary to send her to an asylum, but just at that time my parents were married, and when old Mr. Courtnay heard of it, he wrote and offered them the house we now live in, and a sufficient sum to live on comfortably, if they would take charge of his mad daughter.

"They accepted the offer and came to Glenrose, as you call it; but it was not then a ruin. It was a nice, old-fashioned house, and was large enough to afford a suite of rooms for Miss Courtnay, at some distance from those occupied by my parents. Old Betty, who now lives with us, was her attendant, and she has told me of these things, for they happened before I was born.

"For a few months after her removal the poor young lady was quieter than usual, and papa used all his skill in her service. He began to hope that she would gradually recover; and she was at length permitted to walk about the place without a constant watch being kept upon her. She seemed to have returned to her first state of quiet melancholy, and little apprehension was felt of another outbreak of frenzy.

"But a paroxysm came over her one evening when my father was absent from home. She set fire to her bedclothes, locked the door of her room, and went out in the gathering twilight.

"My mother was not well, and she was lying down asleep when Betty rushed into her room, with the appalling intelligence that the house was on fire, and her young mistress had fled, she could not tell whither. A storm was rising, and a deluge of rain began to pour down, but the fire gained great headway before it fell, and although help came from the Grange, as soon as the light from the burning building attracted notice there, that portion of the house which had been occupied by the maniac was destroyed, leaving only the thick walls standing. With great effort the part we live in was saved."

"And Miss Courtnay—what became of her?"

"Ah! that was the saddest part of all. When the fire was at its height, and the whole valley was lit up by its glare, wild shrieks from the cliffs on the other side of the stream were heard; and standing on the large boulder of rock that saved you from going over the precipice, was seen Annie Courtnay, with her hair loosened and streaming around her. She was clapping her hands, and shouting with mad glee over the ruin she had wrought; by that time the rain had swollen the stream to a mad torrent, and she must have gained the rock before it began to swell.

"How to reach her and save her from destruction was discussed, and several active men set out to scale the cliff, and if possible bring her back safe. She saw them coming—waited till they had gained the tongue of land on which the pine trees grow, and then, with a mocking cry of defiance, threw herself over the precipice. In another instant she was swallowed up by the dark waters below; and never from that day has any vestige of poor Annie Courtnay been found. That is why I gave the pool the name of the Lady's Tarn."

Thorne listened with deep interest to this tragic story. He said:

"It was a sad fate; but better even that, than to live on in the condition to which Miss Courtnay was reduced. Oh, yes; death by any means is preferable to a broken life like that."

"Perhaps it is," replied Claire, "but it seems to me very weak to sacrifice both life and reason to a false and worthless man. I do not think that I should have done so in her place. I can scarcely tell; but I am sure I should not have broken my heart as she did. If I could gain the power, I believe I would try to break the heart of him who deceived me with false promises, as her lover did; for it was base and treacherous in him to be bought off as he was by the old gentleman."

"So it was; but then you see the poor girl could not reach him, he was out of her power. If she had been permitted to marry him she would doubtless have tormented him enough, for when a woman makes a *mésalliance*, she is very apt to repent of it, and render her home anything but a pleasant place to him who shares it with her."

"And how is it with men?" asked Claire, with a faint smile.

"Oh! that is very different; a woman takes her position from that of her husband, and he, if the superior, lifts his wife to his own level; in the other case, she sinks to that of the man she has chosen to marry. I regret having asked you for this sad story, for it has cast a shadow over your bright face."

"I have cause to feel sad when I recall it, for my mother never recovered from the shock she received that night. She faded away and died a few months afterwards. My father remained in the valley, as the tutor of Mrs. Courtnay's son, and since Andrew went away, he has instructed Julia. That is why you came to find us still occupying the wing of the old house that was not burned."

This explanation was scarcely finished when dinner was announced, and they went into the dining-room, where an abundant and elegant repast was spread. Mrs. Courtnay did the honours of her table with hospitable grace, and her new guest was glad to find himself in a house in which all the comforts and luxuries to which he had been accustomed were to be found.

Thorne was very grateful to the old Frenchman, and exceedingly in love with his daughter, but his fastidious tastes led him to recoil from the extreme simplicity in which they lived, yet with which they seemed perfectly contented. If Mrs. Courtnay renewed her invitation to remain a few days, he determined to accept it, as it would be pleasant to rest in this luxurious nest, and visit Glenrose while waiting the arrival of his letters.

Left alone with Claire for many hours of the day, he would find it difficult to refrain from uttering what was in his heart, and the sharp reprimand of M. Lapierre had proved to him that such self-control would be expected of him. Here he could talk of art with his hostess, have books to interest him, and find it easier to be on his good behaviour, than if thrown hourly with the object of his passion.

So, after a very pleasant afternoon, when Mrs. Courtnay said:

"I shall be glad if I can induce you to prolong your stay at the Grange a few days, Mr. Thorne," to the infinite surprise of Claire, he replied:

"Thank you, dear madam, I think I will accept your kind invitation, and thus remove all doubts of my perfect good faith from the mind of M. Lapierre. I will remain your guest till my letters arrive."

The old man's face brightened, and he held out his hand, as he heartily said:

"That is well, sir, and I thank you with all my heart. It will be better for many reasons that you should remain here. I know that you will not think me inhospitable for speaking thus, Mr. Thorne?"

"By no means; we fully understand each other, I think. In a few more days I shall be able to claim the right to come as often, and stay as long as I please, and I warn you I shall avail myself of it."

He glanced at Claire, but she had drawn a thick veil over her face, to conceal the disappointment she keenly felt, for she had not believed that her lover would consent to be left behind. He drew near her, and whispered:

"It is best so, Rosebud. Ever near you I could not restrain the feelings that are ready to burst into words at every glance of your lovely eyes. Your father has some fantastic notions that I am bound to respect—and I must keep in his good graces. Think of me, dream of me, sweet one, for I shall soon be

you in triumph before long, bearing in my hand the talisman that will give me the right to speak of all that is in my heart."

She gave him her hand in silence, and stepping into the carriage, was whirled away by the side of her father.

CHAPTER X.

WALTER THORNE could not deny himself the gratification of seeing his new idol every day, and he rode out on horseback, ostensibly for the benefit of his health, but really to have an opportunity to call at Glenrose, and deepen the impression he had made on the little maiden who dwelt there.

Claire, after the first call, spent the most of her time in wondering when he would come again, and in watching for him with her heart upon her lips. Her life, so lately as tranquil as the clear stream that rippled past her door, had become a wild, impetuous torrent of doubt, hope, dread, and passion, that took from her budding youth all its gentle trust in the future.

She felt as if she had grown older by many years since this disturbing element came into her quiet life, yet she would not have gone back to what she was before she knew Walter Thorne. She accepted the lot he had brought her, be it for good or for evil, and shrank from nothing if endured with him, for him. When together, though no word of love was spoken, each understood the other as well as if the most impassioned protestations had been exchanged, and both were supremely happy in the consciousness of loving and being loved with all the depth and intensity of two fiery natures, that responded to each other as the opposing poles of an electric battery.

On the fourth day after Thorne's removal to the Grange, the mail brought him four letters. Three of them we have already seen; and the fourth one he tossed aside till the others had been perused. He shouted with mad laughter over Wingate's forgery, wondering how he could express himself so properly in the paternal character; but he sobered down considerably when he saw what his friend had to say for himself.

Still graver grew his face as he read the angry protest of his father, and his irate commands to return immediately to his allegiance to his betrothed. He sat grasping this letter in his hand a long time, marvelling if the writer would really carry out his threat of disinheritance, if he pursued the bent of his own inclinations. His lip finally curled contemptuously, as he muttered:

"The old fellow is a terrible blusterer, but, like Falstaff, there is more sound than fury in his threatenings. I won't give way to him. I must secure this fascinating little gipsy as my own, or my destiny will be marred. What is the use of all his money, if I, his only son, cannot purchase with it the happiness of my life? He declares that he won't give it to me if I disobey him; but that is all nonsense. I will bring him round yet, and make him think my Rosebud the most enchanting being in existence. In his wild dream of the impossibilities, he was trying, in imagination, to bring about, he forgot the fourth letter, and, when his eye suddenly fell upon it, he shrank as if a serpent had stung him.

He raised the dainty envelope, addressed in a lady's hand, and, tearing it open, drew forth the enclosure, and read the following lines:

"WILLOW GLEN, July 22, 18—.

"DEAR WALTER:—Mr. Wingate tells me that you have been ill, and I was not near you to nurse you back to health; I will prove to you how tender and true I can be in the shadows as well as in the sunshine of life.

"I can write to you thus freely, because our position gives me the right to show you how much you are to me, how fondly my heart clings to the betrothed of my soul.

"Oh, Walter, how deeply I felt your strange departure, so soon after our betrothal, I cannot tell you; but I would not believe that lack of love for the girl you had asked to become your wife was the cause of your sudden withdrawal. Art has so long been your mistress that you were loth to give her a rival, who would possibly be so exacting as to draw you from your first love if you remained beside her. I tried to understand that, and excused your desertion. I did pardon it, for deep and earnest affection is fertile in excuses for the object on which it is lavished.

"But now my heart begins to fear that it was not well for you to leave me; that you would have been safer beside me than in wandering so far away. You are ill in body, and, I begin to fear, indifferent in feeling, to her whose happiness is centred in you alone.

"Come back to me, Walter; something whispers to me that your heart has wandered from its allegiance, but the inconstancy can only be temporary; you are bound in honour to me, and you dare not break the bond you yourself formed. My pride and my affections are equally outraged at the thought of such want of faith on your part, and I will not think such treachery from you is possible.

"I have read over what I have written, and I am strongly tempted to destroy it; yet, why should I do so? After the vows that have been exchanged between us, I have the right to express my feelings without reserve.

"Mr. Wingate came to me last evening, to say that you had written to him, though not to me; some things he said gave birth to such pangs of jealous doubt as you will never have cause to feel on my account. He spoke of the people you are with, and casually betrayed that you have been nursed by a pretty and interesting girl.

"Ah, Walter, when weakened by illness, and grateful for attention to your comfort, you may begin to think too tenderly of this young creature. I only speak to warn you, for I can never submit to have a corner in your heart given up to another woman. Come away from these people, I entreat; pay them as liberally as possible in gold for the kindness they have extended to you, but not in the heart's coin, for that belongs exclusively to me.

"By this time you are able to travel, I hope, and I shall look for you from day to day, till you make your appearance among those who love and appreciate you far more highly than mere passing acquaintances can. Your devoted AGNES."

Thorne read over this effusion with clouded brow and compressed lips, and he began dimly to see that he was in a dilemma, from which it would be difficult to extricate himself. He saw that his betrothed would not lightly surrender her rights, and he feared that she would use her efforts to keep alive the anger of his father against him, if he persisted in his present course; for he knew that Agnes Willard possessed more influence over the passionate and haughty old man than any one living. To bring about a union between himself and Agnes had been, for several years, the most earnest desire of Colonel Thorne's heart; and Walter knew if she wished to hold him to the pledges he had made, his father would never forgive him for deserting her.

He began to think himself a madman to dream of such a course himself, for ruin stared him in the face if he were eventually cast off. He was unfitted for any pursuit in life; he had been an idler, and a man of pleasure, with a handsome allowance, which he often exceeded; what could he possibly do towards winning his bread, if he found himself thrown on his own resources, was the question he vainly asked himself.

The criticism of M. Lapierre had opened his eyes to the inferiority of his pictures; and even if his talent was above mediocrity, years must elapse before he could hope to win such a reputation as would enable him to live by his art.

So much said common sense. Then arose before him the enchanting face that had so completely bewitched him, and all the passionate impulses of his nature surged up, demanding why he should sacrifice himself and his happiness at the bidding of an unreasonable old man, who possessed the power to disinherit him.

Colonel Thorne would not eventually do it, he persuaded himself; he could not, for he was an only child, and when his father knew the deed to be irrevocable, he must relent. To whom should he give his wealth but to his natural heir? And as to Agnes Willard, she had many lovers, and among them she could find one to console her for his desertion.

Thorne glanced over her letter again, and thought she asserted her rights too strongly. It was not maidenly to write as she had written. She would be jealous as a Turk, too, that was evident enough, and he must pass a happier life with Claire than she would give him even if his heart was not so deeply enthralled by her rival. Both loved him, but how could he place the affection bestowed by the impulsive child of nature, in comparison with that cherished for him by a cold, self-reliant woman like Agnes Willard? Besides, she was quite as old as himself, and her rival was a budding Euphrosyne, with all the exquisite charms of early youth, combined with a depth of feeling and sensibility, as rare at her age as it was fascinating.

As might have been expected from the character of the man, the scale turned in favour of Claire, and Thorne forthwith destroyed the two letters written by his father and Agnes; the remonstrance of Wingate also shared the same fate; then, armed with the spurious consent of Colonel Thorne to his speedy union with the object of his pursuit, he sought Mrs. Courtnay, and displayed it to her in triumph.

After carefully perusing it, she gravely said:

"I am glad that your father throws no obstacle in the way of your marriage with Claire; but I am sorry that he seems to desire an immediate union, Mr. Thorne. I still adhere to my opinion that she is too young to marry, and I shall oppose anything beyond a betrothal for the present."

He laughingly replied:

"We will settle about that, Mrs. Courtnay, and due weight shall be given to your objections. I must hasten now to Glenrose to display my credentials. I am impatient to see the bright eyes of my beauty flash with joy and pride when she reads what I have to show her."

He sprang down the steps, waved a farewell, as he mounted the horse which had been brought round for his evening ride, and galloped off in the direction of the Glen.

Reckless and determined, Thorne was, by this time, in a mood to sacrifice everything to the attainment of the object he so ardently desired to possess. He would trust to Providence to bring all right in the end, and in the meantime he would have his own way, cost what it might to himself or to Claire.

(To be continued.)

CORDELIA'S FORTUNE.

CHAPTER I.

MY mother passed away when I was a prattling child, and my father followed her to the land of spirits before I had seen the close of my thirteenth year. My father had been a physician, and upon his dying bed he placed me in the care of his brother Mark, leaving for me his valuable library, together with his instruments, and quite a valuable collection of anatomical preparations.

He left money enough to educate me; and it was his request that I might adopt his own profession, if, at the proper age, my inclinations could be bent that way. And my uncle Mark had no difficulty in persuading me to follow my father's wishes. I think a love for the science was born in me. Long before I entered the medical school I had become deeply interested in my father's books, and had come to spend many hours in study over the preparations he had left. My uncle had managed the financial affairs so well, that there was money enough to carry me through my studies; and when I had purchased all that I needed to purchase of books, instruments, and medicine, I settled in Ashdale.

And now that I have told you of my studies, and of my entering upon the practice of my profession, you may wish to know what sort of a looking man this young doctor of Ashdale was. If I shall appear to flatter myself, it will be because the truth leads me in that direction. At the age of four-and-twenty I was what a fond mother, or a loving sister, would have called handsome. I was five feet ten inches in height: with a form perfect in all its parts; and blessed with as much muscular power as is generally seen in a person of that age and frame. And then I had devoted much time and attention to manly sports. I had pulled an oar, I had handled the bat, I had swung the dumb-bells, I had performed all sorts of acrobatic feats, with my classmates.

When I finally left college I bore the palm in the department of muscular strength and agility. The portrait which I have of my mother represents her as having been a mild and beautiful woman; and of my own recollection I can bear witness that my father was more than a handsome man—he was one of nature's noblemen—one of those whose very presence commands respect. I inherited something of my father's physique, and something of his strength of mind and intellect; but my face I inherited from my mother; and my mirror told me it was not bad looking.

And so, dear reader, you have an introduction to Paul Cartwright, M.D. You behold a young man whose aim was to do good, and to shun evil; who loved his fellow men, who regarded the internal, rather than the external, qualifications of those who sought his friendship, and who had never yet knowingly or willingly done wrong to any living thing. He stood there, in the morning of his manhood, fresh, vigorous, and buoyant; ready to step forth boldly and confidently, trusting in his own firm purpose of right, determined to succeed if success were possible, and to that end forgetting not the One Eternal Friend from whom all blessings flow.

Ashdale is distant from the metropolis about two hours' ride by rail. It is a good town, and the village is very pleasantly located in a picturesque valley, blessed with pure air and pure water; and a stream of no meagre proportions, flowing through the town, affords water-power sufficient to run the machinery of several extensive manufacturing establishments.

I came to Ashdale during the last week in March

—came an entire stranger—having been recommended to try my fortune in that retired place by a friend who had an interest there. An old physician, who had practised there nearly half a century, had died in the winter; and as the village was growing, the opening was a promising one.

I had an office pleasantly and centrally located, and I had furnished it very neatly and prettily, trusting that the attractiveness thus added to the establishment would ere long pay for itself. Outside show cannot compensate for a lack within; but yet, when the inner-man is all right, an inviting exterior is an addition of real value. This rule holds good in all departments of life. As an eminent public man once said: "Good clothes cannot make a man good; but a really good man looks a great deal better in good clothes than he does in mean ones!"

My first visitor, after my arrangements had been made for business, was Dr. George Durpin. He had been my college-mate at Cambridge, and had settled in Fordham, a pleasant, retired place, ten miles distant, and just that much farther from the railroad than I was. When I had started for college he had come to Fordham and established himself in business; so he was nearly two years ahead of me in the practice of our profession.

"I tell you, Paul," he said, after I had given him an account of my experience since leaving Cambridge, "you have found a better location than mine. This place is growing and thriving, and you may grow and thrive with it; but Fordham will not grow much more. It is too far from the railroad. Still, I have no reason to complain. I have worked it into quite a good practice, and my business is increasing. If you had entered upon the practice when you left Cambridge, you might have had a good business by this time. Why, bless my soul, you were almost a physician when you first entered with me!"

"And," said I, "I had seen the advantage of study and information, and I meant to gain all that was open to me. I tell you, George, a physician cannot know too much."

"I grant that," returned my friend. "But after pursuing a certain course of study, the question is, where next will a physician learn the most? I think, in practice."

"So do I," I admitted. "And I have had that practice. You must remember that I spent over six months in the hospital, going the rounds every day, and making careful minutes of each case that came under my observation. Let me explain to you one great advantage I enjoyed there. During those six months I made diagnoses upon nearly two hundred cases—some of them simple, and some differential. Upon the making of my diagnoses I wrote down every point upon which I had passed judgment, then noted the course of treatment, and also the symptoms as they appeared from day to day. Of those there were forty-three fatal cases—most of them so determined from the first,—and upon death we had the benefit of an autopsy, when we could know exactly how near our diagnoses had come to the truth. No, no, George—I have lost nothing. I had just about money enough to carry me through, and I think it has been well expended. At all events, I would not sell the information I have gained for a fortune."

Durpin remained with me to dinner, and I have no doubt that our interview was of mutual benefit. He gave me many valuable hints touching the habits and characteristics of the people of that district, while I gave him much valuable information which I had gained in the hospital.

Towards the middle of the afternoon, as he was thinking of starting for home, he asked me if I had heard anything of the case of Miss Larkton.

"I have heard mention made of it," I told him, "but I know nothing of the particulars. Have you seen her?"

"Yes," he answered. "I went in with Dr. Bowman. It is a hard case, Paul, and I pity her from the bottom of my heart. In fact, I can't think of her but with pain. She is an only child. A son, the only other child her parents ever had, died a year before I took up my residence here, and I have been told that he was one of the most promising young men in the town. The father, I suppose, is worth a hundred thousand pounds. Of course he is, for he pays taxes on that amount of personal property. Cordelia is only nineteen, and those who know her best say that she is one of the most pure-minded and noble-hearted girls that ever lived. It is very hard to see one so young, so beautiful, so good, and prospective heiress to such a fortune, so surely dying. Oh, Paul, how often have I wished that I could be the one to save her! How many hours have I sat in my office, gazing up into the curling clouds from my old meerschaum, and pictured to myself what the result might be if some kind genius would only give me the power to save her! I think of Aladdin's lamp, and wish that I had it. But it's of no use. She can never gain help on earth."

"Did you examine her critically?" I asked.

He said he did. He and Bowman had spent half an hour with her. The disease had been pronounced cancer of the liver.

"But what's the use?" he went on. "All that money can do has been done. Mr. Larkton has had four of the best physicians from the metropolis to see her, but they pronounced it cancer—and, of course, you know that there can be no hope in that case. It is only a question of time."

"And not a very long time either," said I, sadly, for I had come to feel a deep sympathy for the poor girl.

George asked me if I had ever seen such a case; and I told him I had seen several. In the hospital we had two females of that disease while I was there. I had made a diagnosis of both cases.

"Of course there is no help in such a case?"

"No cure," said I; "and but little relief. Cancer of any of the splanchnic viscera is simply death, and I know of no way in which even time may be gained to the sufferer."

"Poor girl," uttered George, leaning back in his chair and closing his eyes. "Oh! for the lamp of Aladdin!"

"Your wish is vain," said I with a smile; "for I never heard that even the genii of those Orient fables pretended to such miracles."

"Of course not," he cried quite energetically. "That is one of the impossibilities that makes dark spots in the life of a physician. But we need not complain. What is beyond human power may be wisely kept from us. But," continued George, rising, and taking his hat, "you may be called in to see the girl; and if you are, you will find your sympathies moved as you have never had them moved yet."

When my friend had gone, I sat down and thought of Cordelia Larkton; and I thought what a blessed thing it would be for me if I could only cure her. But why ponder thus! The cure was impossible to any art possessed by man.

The first day passed, and George Durpin was my only visitor. The second day came, and that passed without even a friendly call. On the third day a labouring man called in to have a tooth extracted. I took it out instantly; and when he asked me what was to pay I had a mind to tell him nothing; but the thought struck me that that would not be professional.

The man went away, and I stood with the piece of silver in my hand. It was my first fee, and I resolved that I would keep it—that I would never let it pass from me, unless some suffering brother sought charity, and I had nothing else in the world to give him.

On the next day, early in the forenoon, this same man called again. He came now for a neighbour, whose child was sick, and he asked me would I go with him and see the little one. Of course I would, though I did not let him see how gladly I went. So I started forth, and on the way I learned that my patron's name was Adam Stevens; that he was a cooper by trade; and that it was through his recommendation that I had been sent for by the parents of the sick child.

And on the way, too, he asked me if I had seen Miss Larkton; and when I told him that I had not, he expressed the opinion that I ought to do so; and I could see that he regarded me as a skilful man. What simple things can produce marked effects upon the mind of an unlettered, honest man. I had pulled this man's tooth—a tough, old molar—almost without pain, while others, as he declared, "had o'en a'most killed him," and he fancied that I must be skilful in other things as well.

I found the child—a girl of some five or six years—and I very quickly discovered it to be a case of scarlet fever. I looked first around the house, and found everything neat, and in order. I then looked at the mother, and found her to be a woman of intelligence and energy; and I knew that my patient was safe—safe so far as the simple fever was concerned. I told the woman what ailed her child, and she was alarmed, for many children had died of that disease. But I said to her:

"My good woman, if you will follow my directions implicitly, I think I may insure you the life of your loved one. Of course the disease is a dangerous one; and were your child to be neglected, she would die; but, if you will join with me, we will together soon set her playing out in the warm spring sunshine."

It warmed my heart to see the light that beamed upon that woman's face; and more than once I blessed, in my soul, the stout old cooper by my side for his homely work of commendation. This was my first case, and the result of my services here might "make or break" me. If I should live and practise half a century, here was my starting point; and the reader will bear with me if I am particular in speaking of it.

I felt a pride in this case, and I was thankful that fortune had cast my lines where I was to have a faithful nurse; for your honest physician will tell you that he looks to the nurse with full as much of hope as he does to his medicine. This was a typical case of scarlet fever, and I meant to cure it as soon as nature could do the work. The first dose of medicine I had prepared under my own eye—a simple, but emphatic, cathartic, such as I judged suitable to the constitution—and when this had been given, I gave my directions for treatment, and promised to call again in the afternoon.

According to promise, I visited my little patient towards evening, and, under the influence of the application of tepid water to the surface of the body, as I had directed, the skin had assumed a pretty, brilliant colour.

"What medicine was I going to give now?"

And the woman was utterly astonished when I told her. She had pictured to herself a close, suffocating room, a table filled with cups, phials, and paper parcels; but when she came to find that her child was not going to take any nasty medicine at all—only something of a mild and pleasant nature, to assist in cooling the heated system—while the grand treatment was to be the keeping of the pores of the skin open by a proper application of pure water—when she came to understand this, and that she was to be the physician after all, she entered into the scheme with her whole heart, and I knew that I could depend upon her.

The result was, that in an incredibly short space of time—incredible to those who had been doctored by dosing and dosing, and then dosing on the top of that—the child was up and out of doors; and I thought to myself, what will people think of this?

And I'll tell you what most of them said. They shook their heads, and said:

"It was only a cold. It wasn't scarlet fever at all."

And I found that success was not to be the creature of the day.

But there was another case in store for me—a case which was to gain for me in a few short weeks what many an intelligent physician had laboured for a lifetime in vain.

CHAPTER II.

Adam Stevens, the cooper, was a man of sense. He knew very well that the child of his neighbour had been sick with scarlet fever, and he knew that the little one had been cured by skilful treatment; and he was not slow in sounding my praise, the result of which was that my name was brought before the public, and that was one point gained, at least.

It was about a week after the recovery of my first patient—a pleasant spring-like morning—that I sat alone in my office, looking over one of my surgical works, and wishing, the while, that I could be called upon to perform a capital operation, for I had faith to believe that I could do such a piece of work safely and well—thus engaged, when my door was opened, and a gentleman entered. He asked if I was a Doctor Cartwright, and, upon being answered in the affirmative, he removed his hat, and took a seat.

In the first place I did not like him. I had, from earliest youth, taken great interest in studying character from outward signs—from physiognomy—from the general form and carriage of body—from the voice, and from handwriting; and while in college I had often surprised our professors by exhibitions of my powers in this respect.

This man was of medium height, rather light built, though there was considerable breadth of shoulders, while a lack of fulness of the chest being made up by a humping of the back, gave him a partial stooping appearance. His hair was black and straight; and his beard, worn full and neatly trimmed, was of the same raven hue. His nose was clearly of the Syrian or Hebrew cast—just such a nose as you will find in the picture of a Bedouin Arab—while the general contour of the rest of his face, as well as the colour of the skin, had the Indian cast. There must have been Indian in his blood. It was as plain as was the Syriac type of the nose. His forehead was low, and conspicuously bony; the eyebrows were thick, black, and strong, lying close down upon the eyes, and meeting over the bridge of the nose; the eyes themselves were small and black, somewhat sunken; while two or three sharp, deep wrinkles, starting from their outer corners, extended entirely across the cheeks. His voice was to me very unpleasant. It was weak, stuttering, and highly pitched, showing that the vocal cords of the larynx were thin and badly strung. It was not the voice of a bold, generous man; but a voice made for lying and button-holing—a voice prone to whispering, as though the thoughts of the individual were not such

as could be safely spoken in a loud, open tone. He was somewhere about thirty years of age; dressed with scrupulous nicety; and his whole appearance, to the casual observer—to him who judged by external qualifications alone—would have been that of a perfect gentleman.

Said I to myself, after I had marked his points of physiognomy, and had noticed the movements of his body, that man can appear to be a most devoted friend. But woe to the individual who trusts him too far! If you would perfect a vengeful plot, secure his services at once; but if you have upon your hands a philanthropic or benevolent work, he can render you no assistance.

"Doctor," said my visitor with a familiar smile, "allow me to introduce myself. My name is Walter Fitzroy. I do not belong to this place, though I am making a stop here for the present. Perhaps you have heard of the illness of the daughter of Andrew Larkton?"

I told him that the case had been pretty thoroughly explained to me by a physician who had examined the sufferer.

"It is a hard case," he continued, with a shake of the head, "a very hard case; but I cannot bear to see the poor girl lying there day after day, with nothing being done to help her. It doesn't seem natural. And I have come to you, sir, to see if you will call to make an examination. It is the wish of the lady's parents that you should do so."

I told him that I did not think it would be of any use. If Doctors M—— and R—— had examined it, and pronounced upon it, it would be presumptuous for me to go. Said I:

"An old and well-established physician can afford to go and announce that he can do nothing for a sufferer, but it is different with one just entering upon the practice. If I go, of course there will be a faint hope hung upon the result; and when I announce, as announce I must, that nothing can be done, they will not take it as they did from the man of experience."

But Mr. Fitzroy would not take "no" for an answer. He had been commanded by Mr. Larkton to fetch me, and he would have me go. And he bade me consider that the friendship of such a man as the retired banker was worth securing.

But I suggested that the simple declaration from me that I could be of no service would not be very likely to warm the father's heart with much of friendship.

"At all events," retorted my visitor, with a significant smile, "such an answer as that, even, after a kind and careful examination, would be more likely to enlist the man's good-will than would your utter refusal to come to his house at his earnest request.

Certainly, there was something in that—something I had not thought of—and without farther deliberation I told Mr. Fitzroy I would accompany him.

"But," said I, as I arose and got my pocket-case, "you must remember the circumstances under which I go. I go, not with thoughts of curing the sufferer, but with a willingness to lend my aid where it can be made available, and with a sincere wish that I may be able to furnish some agent that shall relieve her in a measure of her pain and unrest."

The man professed to understand me perfectly, and he said he was pleased with my position. In short, he was very flattering, and yet not broadly so. He did not flatter, as do those who know not what they say, only to speak words of praise; but he was seemingly modest and frank in his encomiums, and had it not been for the tones of his voice, and for that unfortunate conformation of form and feature, I should have been pleased with him. I treated him with marked consideration, however, for I did not wish to make him my enemy. Just at that time, in my then present situation as a new and untried physician in the place, I could not afford to gain the ill-will of such a man.

As we walked along I wondered what this man could be to Cordelia Larkton. I hoped, not much. The thought that he might be her lover filled me with dread and apprehension. I shuddered when I pictured to myself a young, beautiful, amiable, and fragile maiden consigned to the keeping of such as he for life. Ah!—a short life it must be, at best.

Do you say I was foolish? You do not know how much I had read of that man's character. The Bengal tiger, crouching in his native jungle, could not have been more suggestive of covert cruelty and mortal danger to his selected victim, than was this man of mortal danger to the one upon whom his evil eye had been fixed. And yet, as we walked together, the many whom we met in all probability regarded this same man as an upright and honourable citizen; and had he been wealthy ninety-and-nine of every hundred mothers would have considered him an eligible and most desirable husband for their daughters.

Andrew Larkton lived in a fine mansion, upon a gentle eminence near the centre of the village, guarded from the travelled street by a broad park, tastefully laid out with gravelled walks, carriage paths, flower-beds, and towering forest trees. The main house was of stone, two stairs high above the basement, with two verandas extending entirely around it. The out-buildings, &c., were finished in keeping with the mansion, and the whole establishment formed about as pretty and attractive a scene as can be found in the county.

In the lower hall we were met by Mr. Larkton, who, when I had been introduced to him, took my hand with earnest warmth. There was a character now before me which I could not read in a moment. He did not carry his character so emphatically in his face as did Walter Fitzroy. He was a man of medium height, full and stout of frame, without corpulency, broad and heavy at the shoulders, with a massive head; the hair thin and sparse, and slightly tinged with gray, and his face smoothly shaven. His features were regular, and he would have been handsome, had it not been for the loss of the left eye. The substance of the eye was not entirely gone, but the sight had been destroyed by accident, and the result was an unpleasant appearance, which, at first view, gave a sinister look to the face. He was somewhere between fifty and sixty years of age, and, as has been already stated, he was a retired banker, doing business now only for recreation and occupation of the passing time.

In the parlour I was introduced to Mrs. Larkton, a small and perfectly-formed woman, still fresh, and beautified with half a century of experience in her cup of life. When I saw this, I knew that Mr. Larkton must be a kind and indulgent husband; and a man whose nature leads him to that course of virtue cannot be a bad man in any department of life.

"Doctor," said the host, in a frank, honest way, "we do not expect that you can cure our child. We are prepared for the worst, because we have been taught to believe that it must come; still we think that something ought to be done. We cannot feel right to see our darling sitting in the great arm-chair day after day, and week after week, without the attendance of a physician. Those who have doctored her declare that nothing can be done to prolong life, and they seem disinclined to continue their attendance. I appreciate their motives, and I have no doubt they do what they think is best."

He saw that I looked surprised, and he offered a little explanation.

"Do not understand me, sir, that our old physicians have neglected anything, or that they refused to visit the sufferer; but, sir—they—do nothing. They say there is nothing that can be done."

That was the trouble—just as I had expected. These poor anxious ones, fated to behold the cherished idol gradually dying, were wondering if something could not be done—they knew not what, but only something. I wished then that I had not come; for what could I do to satisfy that longing of their souls. I could simply see their child, and tell them I could do nothing. And then the sufferer herself. Would not she take my coming as a sign of help, and so look to me for relief? And what could I do? If she was in pain, I could give her an opiate, not to allay pain, but to deaden her body so that she could not feel it. But I had gone too far to retreat. Oh, how Durpin's wish came back to my mind as the eager mother placed her hand upon my arm, and looked up into my face.

"Doctor," she said, her sweet, sad face, in its shadows of sorrow and longing, appealing in language more eloquent than tongue ever spoke, "if you would only try to help our darling!"

Then it was that I thought of Aladdin's lamp, and of some of those marvellous medications which the Orient genii used to keep locked up in the bowels of the earth. I looked into the mother's face, and shook my head, and I told her that she must not allow herself to base any hopes upon the result of my investigations. Physicians more able than myself, and far more experienced, had pronounced upon the case, and she could not surely expect that I should find light where they had found not a glimmer.

A shadow more deep than had before rested there, came upon her face, and she bowed her head as she murmured:

"Oh, I cannot give her up!"

The father and the mother went with me up the stairs, into a large chamber overlooking the park. Fitzroy did not bear us company. By one of the deep bay windows was a large chair, covered with green velvet, and so stuffed and padded that it was like a downy bed; and in this chair, with her face turned towards the window, sat Cordelia Larkton. My first thought, as I gazed upon that face, was of heaven! for if ever upon earth, in earthly guise, there was an angelic presence, my gaze rested upon it then.

As fair and white as the purest lily that ever rested upon the bosom of the placid lake—as serenely beautiful as ever the hand of mortal inspiration wrought from Parian marble—and as child-like in her trust as the confiding infant that knows of earth only the unfailing ægis of a mother's love. Her hair of richest brown, softening to golden sheen where the light fell strongly upon it, swept away in clustering curls over her shoulders; her silken lashes, long and heavy, drooped over the half-closed eyes; while the hands, thin and white and seemingly translucent in their utter purity, were folded upon the crimson robe that enveloped her form. I caught all this before she knew of my presence.

Her mother told her that I was Doctor Cartwright, and that I had come to see if I could help her. The sufferer smiled a sweet, grateful smile, and put out one of those thin, translucent hands. I took it, and held it, and sat down by her side.

If I had wished for the power of the fabled genii before, how much more did I wish for it now! My soul! to save such a being, after she had been given up to die by the best physicians of the metropolis, would be worth the price of a crown.

In a very few moments I saw that the girl trusted me—that she had given me her confidence—and that already she had begun to take new hope. I removed the rebundant clothing, and placed my ear upon her right side; and as I was thus commencing my examination I called to mind what Durpin had said concerning my loss of practice by having taken those two extra years for farther study. I could have wagered my whole stock of books and instruments that during his two years of practice in that country town he had had no opportunity for a sure and reliable base of judgment in such examination as I was then engaged in; while I had enjoyed so much, and such continuous opportunity for like examination, that the variety of sounds given to the ear from the working of the internal organs was as familiar as were the pulses of the radial artery.

When I had listened awhile to the sounds of the labouring heart and lungs, I began to question the patient touching her feelings at various times since she had been taken ill. As I went on with my questions I noticed that her eyes had grown brighter, and a slight pressure of my finger upon her wrist told me that the heart had started into new life. Could it be possible that she had read hope in my face? Certainly I had tried not to show it.

Do you ask me if I entertained any hope? I'll tell you. When I had noted the sounds of the heart, and had made such examination of the right hypochondriac region as I could under the circumstances, and had gained from the sufferer a knowledge of what her feelings had been during the past few weeks, I said to myself, "This is not cancer!"

I could not be sure then; but to me the probabilities were that the physicians before me had made a mistake in their diagnoses; and a mistake once made is very apt so to warp the judgment that subsequent developments are not properly noticed. In the first place, the general symptoms—the appearance of the eye, the skin, the pulse, and the tone of circulation—did not betoken cancer. And then, if the patient herself had made no mistake in her story of sensations, there had been a growth of the tumour altogether too rapid to bear out the idea of scirrhus character. There was trouble—serious trouble, and I believed it to be an abscess.

"Doctor, can you help me?"

The voice was low and timorous, but painfully eager. I started and looked into her face. She had reached out one of those translucent hands, and rested it upon my shoulder, and the expression upon her face was imploring and prayerful. What strange emotions flooded my soul! As I met that gaze I thought to myself, oh, if I could save this pure being and win her for myself!

I cannot tell what was the exact character of my feelings at that moment, though I am forced to the confession that I loved her—loved her deeply, devotedly, and almost passionately—not with such passion as is born of earth, but with a passion of soul and spirit, looking to joys of life above the gross and the sensual. Call it folly, if you will—denounce me as you please—those were the sentiments of my inner being, and I could not avoid them.

"My dear lady," I said, with strictly guarded emphasis, "I cannot, at this stage, give you a direct answer. You ask me if I can help you. I cannot promise. Should you ask me if I thought your disease must be necessarily fatal, I should hesitate, perhaps, but I should not tell you, yes."

Her face grew brighter, and by the look she thanked me more than she could have done in words.

And then she told me—oh, if I could only give her something so that she could rest—so that she could gain even one hour of undisturbed sleep!

I reflected ere I answered. I found that she had not been taking opiates of any kind, and, after a

while, I concluded that it would be safe to give a mild sleeping potion. Had I thought the trouble to be the same as others had thought, I might not have done it; because, once begun, it must be continued while the difficulty lasted, but if the trouble was as I thought, then a gentle opiate could do no harm, because the need of the continuation thereof could not be long.

So I prepared her a few powders, and, having called her mother and given directions for their administration, I promised to call again on the morrow. I had turned away to follow Mrs. Larkton from the chamber, when the invalid called me back. She reached forwards, and took one of my hands in both her own.

"Doctor, do you think I shall ever see the white snow again?"

I smiled cheerfully, and answered her:

"I cannot tell you now, but I will tell you this; if I can help you, I will."

And then, after a moment's consideration, I added:

"It is heaven who will give you the help, and no man living can care for you, under the help of the Heavenly Father, more surely than can I."

She murmured a fervent blessing; her gaze was fixed gratefully upon me, and when I finally turned away, the barbed arrow of Eros was firmly fixed in my heart.

(To be continued.)

A PIECE of lace has been woven by a native of India, ten yards long and one yard wide, weighing but 3 oz. 2 dwts., and which could easily be passed through a very small finger ring.

A REMARKABLE fall of the barometer is reported by Mr. T. L. Plant, of Birmingham. On Saturday, the 18th ult., at noon, the mercury stood at 29 2-5 inches; at six o'clock on Monday morning it was at 28 1-5 inches, showing a decline of one inch and one-fifth in forty-two hours. The atmospheric pressure seldom recedes as low as this, even in winter. "I have no record," says Mr. Plant, "comparable with the above for the depression between April and September.

FROM a return just presented to Parliament, it appears that nearly all the sheep and lambs imported into this country come from Belgium, Denmark, France, Germany, and Holland. In records compiled for the year 1864, it is stated that 7407 sheep were imported from Belgium, 30,633 from Denmark, 1264 from France, 189,371 from Germany, and 247,609 from Holland. The total number of lambs imported during the same year was 17,896, 6102 of which came from Denmark, 11,537 from Holland, and the rest from other countries. The largest imports of sheep occurred in the month of December, and of lambs in August, none of the latter being imported in January and February, and only 1107 of the former during the first month of the year.

ACTION OF WATER ON LEAD.—Professor Bötger inquiring into the cause of the action of distilled water on lead has found it to be due to the presence of carbonate of ammonia, and not, as is usually ascribed, to the air dissolved in the water. After having been boiled for a time, distilled water will not attack the lead until after a considerable exposure, when a reabsorption of ammonia and carbonic acid from the air, where they are always present, may be supposed to have taken place. Bötger has farther found that the alloying of the lead with a small amount of tin protects the former from being acted upon, and this fact suggests the advantage of purposely introducing a little tin into the metal from which lead piping is to be manufactured.

GENTLE LEONIE.

CHAPTER V.

WINTER passed away; and spring, with brightening freshness, dawned in Paris. The Duke d'Aumale was now a frequent visitor at the chateau of Count Fontenier, and it was rumoured among the most intimate friends of the duke and the count, that the former had come to be a favoured suitor for the Lady Laure Fontenier's hand. Though some were inclined to treat the matter as a jest, yet at length it became a generally credited report, that the beautiful and youthful daughter of the count, would some time or other become the Duchess d'Aumale; and the gay world of fashion did not, when they viewed the matter in a worldly point, consider the match as one to be wondered at, for the Duke d'Aumale, though older in years than the lady's father even, was still noble-looking and attractive, and his immense wealth, and grand title, were not to be lightly viewed by the one he sought. So, after the first surprise was over, the match began to be looked upon as one suitable and agreeable in every respect; and some of the fair ladies of Paris even began to envy Lady Laure Fontenier, and wish that their own charms had attracted this noble suitor.

But how progresses the wooing?

The Duke d'Aumale came frequently to the chateau of the count. Lady Laure received him with kindness and gentleness, in obedience to her father's expressed wishes. But there were no signs of feelings, no emotion of love, or regard, in the manner which she displayed towards him. Her countenance did not brighten; her eyes did not smile, nor her cherry lips breathe words which it would have pleased the duke's ears to have listened to; and the Duke d'Aumale grew, from at first missing these signs, to ardently long for them; and to express a desire to the lady that her manner might be more affectionate, and less undemonstrative and reserved.

Lady Laure Fontenier received this wish with a gentle dignity, which did not leave her after the duke had spoken. She replied in tones both sweet and ladylike:

"I give to the Duke d'Aumale all that is in my heart towards him. If my manners appear cold and reserved, it is because he has not had power to call into my heart a warmer feeling than friendship towards himself. It is not my fault, then, as I give to him all I have to offer, in exchange for the love he professes towards me."

The Duke d'Aumale listened to the words of the beautiful being, to whom he was becoming more devotedly attached at each new interview. Her youthful loveliness, her quiet ways, and her grace, coupled with the sweet, womanly dignity of manner, peculiarly her own, were beginning to awaken new zeal and zest within the heart of the lover. As he looked upon her, at this interview which transpired in a drawing-room of the Chateau Fontenier, he felt at the moment that she was to him the most desired *bijou* in the city of Paris or in the whole realm of France. He replied to her words, which had just been addressed to himself:

"You are as frank as you are lovely, beautiful Laure. You have but just made known to me the state of your heart. It has not displeased me, though it has pained my ears to listen to your words. But I will endeavour to improve upon them. I will strive to render myself more to the taste of her I seek for my wife. I will endeavour in future to be more like a younger lover; and by more youthful manners seek entrance within the portals of that heart, which your words assure me I have not yet stood within. Will this suit you better, lovely Laure?" he asked, in conclusion.

"I cannot tell what will please me in this matter, Duke d'Aumale," she made answer. "My heart is yet as a sealed book to my own eyes. I know not how little or how great can be the affection which may some time live in it towards the person who should become my lord and husband. In receiving your addresses I obey the wish of my sire. I have not found myself overcome with love towards you, and perhaps such passion may never become a portion of my life; if so, then I could give to you only such a friendship as now rests within my breast. If that contents you, and you should still desire the union, then, when you and my sire decide, the wedding day shall be. But I am young yet, and the only child of my sire. He would be lonely without me; and I should sometimes grieve for my girlhood home, if I too soon leave its shelter. Then, let the day be put away into the distance, and let me remain here for some time to come," said the girl.

"I will not press the subject now, beautiful Laure; but will wait till I have more fully endeavoured to win your affection. Let the summer season pass between now and the bridal; and when the autumn or winter months shall come, then I shall expect my lovely bride to give herself to me, and to come and brighten my home, which shall be then arranged to receive her. Let this be the understanding, my gentle love; and in the time which passes between now and then, let more tender emotions grow in your heart towards your future husband," concluded the duke as he arose to leave the lady upon the spring morning that this conversation occurred between them.

After he had passed out, the Lady Laure Fontenier sat engrossed in deep thought. Her countenance was pale, and her brow grew anxious with the deep emotions which were stirred within her breast. She spoke at length, and her words were low and sad:

"I do not love the Duke d'Aumale," she said. "My heart is cold and unmoved when he addresses me, and moves not quicker at the words he utters. Not so should be the feelings of a wife to her husband; they should glow with joy at the slightest word of him she weds. But there is none of this affection within my heart towards the Duke d'Aumale; and yet I have promised myself to him—I have said that I would be his bride, because it is the wish of my father and himself. My suitor is noble and kind, and will do all that lies in the power of mortal to give happiness to me; but still he is not dear to my heart, as I feel my husband should be. But I have given my word; and, even had I not, my sire's wishes have ever been my law before. In this, then, I must not disappoint him—I must become the wife of the Duke d'Aumale, and endeavour to win content, if not happiness, to my home when shared with him," and, with these noble words, uttered in a calm tone, the youthful lady rose and left the drawing-room, and sought her own apartment.

When the pleasant days of summer came, the long sunshiny days, when the open country invited the denizens of cities to a pleasant sojourn out of town, Lady Laure expressed a desire to her father to spend a portion of the time with an old nurse of her childhood, who lived in a little hamlet some fifty miles distant.

She had visited there once previously, some years ago, when she was yet a school pupil, on one of her summer holidays, with her governess. Every memory of that visit was delightful to her now. She thought of the quiet, little village as a place of rest and happiness; and longed to be out of Paris, and in some pleasant nook like this charming place of sunny memory. Thinking thus, she requested permission of her sire to again go to Troyes for a season, and visit the home of her old nurse.

Lady Laure Fontenier, after the conversation with the Duke d'Aumale, began to discover a new feeling in her heart, and in this discovery she grew sometimes to dread the visits of her suitor. She felt how unnatural and hopeless the task would be for her to love him; and so she began to wish that he had never desired to make her his wife. And, sometimes, she shrunk from his visits, and made excuses to absent herself from the chateau, when she thought he would be present. In this frame of mind she came to long for a quiet spot where she would be free from the visits of her lover. Then the recollection of her nurse's home came up vividly to her disturbed mind; and she resolved to win the consent of her father that she might go there for a time, pleading that she could practise her favourite art of sketching amid the fine country scenery surrounding the place.

The Count Fontenier did not refuse his daughter; but granted his consent the more readily when he saw that her cheeks were losing their bright colour, and that her step was becoming less springing and elastic. He fancied that the heat was telling upon her. He was blind, and saw not that her heart was heavy. But he gave his consent, and she departed on her visit.

CHAPTER VI.

UPON a summer's morning, some two weeks later, Lady Fontenier took her sketch-book in her hand, and set forth from the cheerful, bright cottage of her nurse, and went out for a stroll, to transfer some portions of the fine scenery surrounding the village to the sketch-book which was her favourite companion.

She had now been a visitor at the cottage nearly two weeks; and in that time, the old bloom was beginning to return to her cheeks, and the bright colour to her dark eyes. The nurse—old Charlotte Lobeau—was a cheerful, pleasant body, and still strong and active. She had received her visitor with words of delighted welcome; and conducted her, almost as soon as her arrival, over the neat apartments of her cottage home. Lady Fontenier was agreeably entertained and amused, and expressed her pleasure with such words of pleasant thanks for her nurse's kindness that the latter was delighted, and exclaimed, in a cheery voice, that it would be the happiest time of her old age to have her little nursling under her roof. "Who would have thought," she said, "that such a great lady would ever come to pay me a long visit? I haven't had one here since you came, five years ago, when you were almost a little girl. But you promised then to come again; and, *ma chère enfant*, you have come as you said, and made my eyes glad to look on your sweet face!" And old Charlotte Lobeau said this with such an expression of truth upon her smiling countenance as at once convinced her listener that she was a very welcome guest.

"I am as charmed to be here, as you are to receive me; for I have ever thought of my own former visit with feelings of pleasure; and resolved that I would fulfil my promise and come again at the first opportunity. So here you see me now, good Charlotte," replied Lady Fontenier, as she at length returned to the little parlour, after being escorted about the house by the worthy old dame, and sat down to rest from the fatigue of the journey on one of the softly cushioned seats which were an especial pride of the nurse's furniture in her home.

The woman went out to make preparations for

the evening meal. She was beyond sixty, but still active and strong, and scorned the idea of keeping a servant. She lived in this pleasant home, which the liberal kindness of Count Fontenier had enabled her to purchase after she left his service. She had one married daughter, who lived with her; and the two women cultivated the little piece of ground attached to the cottage, and kept the house trim and neat as wax, so that it was really a charming abode, fitting even for the daughter of a count—the future Duchess d'Aumale—to inhabit, for a brief space, if the lady herself desired its quiet and seclusion.

Lady Laure Fontenier had brought her favourite maid—Lizette—with her, and also her crayons, pencils and paints, together with her sketch-book; and she decided, as she sat in the little summer parlour upon the first afternoon of her arrival, that she should much enjoy her stay with her old nurse Charlotte. But that afternoon passed away, and the days between then and the morning when we find her just setting forth with her sketch-book to transfer some of the surrounding scenery to its pages.

This morning, as we have said, was fair and smiling; and the gladness of the scene out of doors wooed the lovely artist to catch up her pencils and book, and hurry from the cottage. She had taken a path leading to a beautiful little house embowered amid vines and shrubbery, and from a point in the road where she felt she should be unobserved, rapidly sketched the cottage and its surroundings.

Then, after bestowing a glance upon her work, to learn wherein she could improve it, she drew forth her finer pencils, to retouch the picture and complete her work. But just then, when the pencils were in her hand, she observed that she was noticed by some one coming up the path behind her; and only seeing that the intruder upon her solitude was a young and handsome man, she quickly caught up her sketch-book, and turned and walked rapidly towards the house of her nurse.

Lady Laure Fontenier opened the gate, and passed into the little yard in front of her nurse Charlotte's cottage. Her step had been hasty and her cheek was flushed. She thought she was not deceived when her ears were greeted by the sound of footsteps on the country road following her own. She went up the little walk to the house, but the gate was quickly opened after her. Just as she arrived at the door, where the clustering roses clambered up on either side, to invite her to stop and pluck their fragrant flowers, she turned to gaze at the intruder upon her sketching and upon her home. But before she could utter a word of inquiry or displeasure, the young man had advanced, and stood almost before her. He removed his hat, with the courtliness of a nobleman of the realm, and addressed her in language polite and gentlemanly. His voice was musical, and his words sounded pleasantly to her ears:

"I have come to beg your pardon, fair lady, for interrupting you at your sketch," he said. "I am sorry that I forced you to flee at my coming just now. You were taking a careful sketch of my home, and I think it must have been an agreeable one to you, if you love the art of delineating as well as I myself do. My own home, though not elegant and grand, has yet much of beauty about it; and the loveliness of nature is always, to my mind, more attractive than the splendour and magnificence of man's creative power."

Lady Laure Fontenier now looked frankly, and with her sweet smile, upon the stranger. She held out the incomplete sketch for his inspection, as she replied:

"If you are a lover of my favourite art, doubtless you have practised much, and have perfected yourself in its different branches. I am but a beginner, and have much to learn; but at every opportunity I avail myself of the leisure I obtain, and sketch for the enjoyment of the hour. Your home has looked so attractive to me, as I passed in my walks, that I formed the determination to sketch it, thinking how pleasant it would be to look upon such a picture of rural loveliness when I had returned to my home," she said. Then she added, as the young man still gazed at the sketch:

"You are pleased with it, I perceive. But it lacks so many points of perfection, that I am almost vexed with myself for showing it to you. Yet, if you have studied the art much, you can tell me how to acquire more skill than my teacher has done."

"I am, indeed, a lover of sketching, and I pronounce this picture charming, and almost perfect!" replied the young man. "You must possess great talent, and have practised with care and precision, to obtain so correct a likeness as this of the scene it represents, fair lady—my own quiet home. I have devoted much time to the art, and hope yet to make it my profession in life; for I am happier when following this loved pursuit than when absorbed in any other occupation of life," he replied. Then he added again: "You are from London, where I hope to go some time or other, to perfect myself in painting. But, now, should you remain much longer in this little hamlet, I will, if you should desire it, become your companion in some of your sketching moods, and impart to you all the skill which lies within the power of my mind and fingers."

"I thank you, sir, for your kind offer. And as it is made in frankness and sincerity of heart, so I accept it; and while I am an inmate of my present abode—my nurse, Charlotte Lobeau's home—shall be gratified to receive you as a visitor therein. Will you enter now, sir, and become acquainted with good Charlotte, or are you already a friend of hers?" asked Lady Fontenier, as she took the sketch-book, which he still held, and was about to turn towards the cottage door again.

"I cannot stay to go in now!" he replied. "But I am already acquainted with good Charlotte Lobeau, and sometimes visit her; and now, that you have given me permission to see you, I shall come with greater happiness. Permit me now to bid you a good morning, fair lady. Some time, soon, I shall avail myself of your kind permission!" and, with a graceful bow, the young man turned and walked down the garden path out of the gate, and was soon on the highway beyond, going in the direction of his home. Lady Fontenier, the fair artist, entered the cottage, and sought her room, to lay aside her crayons and sketch-book, with thoughts of the stranger filling her breast.

CHAPTER VII.

AFTER that first meeting between the young artist—Laure Fontenier, and the stranger, whose name was Leone Moreau—the two met frequently, both in their walks and at the cottage of Dame Lobeau. The latter personage was glad that her pet Laure had found some one in the little hamlet to take interest in, outside of her own home. Leone Moreau was an especial favourite with her, because he reminded her of the nobleman whom she had seen in London, when they came to Count Fontenier's chateau, when she lived within its handsome walls. The young man thus received Charlotte Lobeau's sanction to his visits to her cottage, and as the companion of Laure in her walks, and, after their first meeting, they went out to sketch together.

Leone Moreau lived with his mother—a pale-faced, delicate-looking woman—in the pleasant cottage we have seen as Lady Laure stood before it, transferring a copy to her sketch-book. It was a beautiful little home, half-hidden from the gaze of the passers-by upon the highway, which ran at the bottom of the garden, and stretched away to the open country beyond on one side, and to the little village on the other. Fragrant honeysuckle and jasmine vines were in the garden in front, and rose bushes, covered with buds and blossoms; while a bed of various-coloured flowers lay on each side the path leading to the house; and tall, sheltering elms and poplars rose high above the house, and waved their spreading branches protectingly over it.

Lady Laure Fontenier learned that Leone Moreau and his mother lived alone in this embowered retreat, and she gave a ready affirmative when the young man asked if she would like to enter his home, and make the acquaintance of his mother. This was one morning when he had come to call for her, and the two had taken their pencils and sketch-books, and gone out to pursue their favourite art. She had immediately assented, expressing a desire to make a call then, if agreeable to him and his mother. So the young man conducted her within his home.

Lady Laure Fontenier sat in the little front room, and awaited the return of Leone Moreau, who had gone in search of his mother, after seeing that his guest was seated. As the young girl gazed around the apartment, she beheld the evidences of a refined, cultivated taste in every appointment of the room. The furniture was simple, but arranged with exquisite effect, such as only one who had dwelt in refined society could design or produce. She was just deciding this in her mind, and wondering what sort of a personage the mother of Leone Moreau could be, when the door opened, and a lady appeared with the son who had been to seek her.

The Lady Laure Fontenier was at once struck with the resemblance between mother and son, though the lady was delicate and pale, and the young man was vigorous and strong in frame and health. But there were the same blue eyes, the same wavy brown hair, the same gentle dignity, and polish of manner and grace of bearing. She noticed all these things as the two entered together. Then, as the lady advanced towards her, and held out her slender hand to welcome the visitor, Lady Laure Fontenier felt her own taper fingers press around Madame Moreau's, with a thrill of pleasure and involuntary respect and admiration.

The lady spoke with dignity and graceful ease, welcoming her guest. "My son has made me aware that we have a visitor within our humble home. I am happy to receive you, Lady Fontenier, and I trust you will not be annoyed by the simplicity of the house which you have entered. With us it is home; and therefore, though modest and humble, is endeared by a thousand pleasant associations. You are welcome to it; and I am charmed to meet with one who possesses, in common with Leone, a love for his favourite art. I have observed you often, when you were sketching near here, and wished that I might speak to you, you seemed so happy in your study of nature and the beauties of our little hamlet," said the lady, while she stood before her guest, and gazed upon her with a respectful, yet interested glance in her soft blue eyes.

Lady Laure Fontenier replied with pleasure to the words of Madame Moreau. She was charmed with the appearance of the lady, her delicate, high-bred looks, and the refined simplicity of the cottage home which she inhabited with her son.

"You do me honour, gentle madame," she said, "to so readily give greeting to a stranger. I am charmed to make your acquaintance, and to enter within your home. It is a marvel of elegant simplicity; and it teaches me that wealth and rank are not of necessity things to be desired as essentials to happiness. I trust you will allow me to come often and visit you while I remain in Troyes, for I feel that your friendship would add to my happiness while here, and the memory of it be very delightful, to carry with me back to my father's when I return thither again." And the young Lady Laure spoke with earnestness and warmth, which attested the truth of her words.

When Lady Fontenier spoke of her home, she noted that Madame Moreau grew a shade more pale, and that she clasped her slender hands together, as if with sudden emotion. Perhaps the lady had friends there, or had known some there in her earlier life; or, possibly, she had once dwelt there, for she looked not like one who had been born and bred in this rural hamlet. And thinking thus, Lady Fontenier asked, in a respectful, deferential voice, unknowing what emotions her words might call forth in the breast of Madame Moreau:

"I perceive that when I mention Paris as my home, the name of that gay city calls some memory to your mind. Perhaps you know something about it? Have friends within it, or mayhap have lived therein yourself? If so, and I can give you information concerning any that you once knew, then I would gladly do so; for my own life has been passed there in the chateau of my sire—Count Henri Fontenier—whom, perhaps, you may have heard of if you were ever within the city?" said the Lady Laure.

"Your thoughts are correct, Lady Fontenier. I did once dwell within Paris, but it was many, many years ago, when I was youthful like yourself. I know not if I have any friends there now. I did know your noble father—Count Fontenier—when I was there; for he was a nobleman, whose name was loved and respected by all. Your mother, too—the Countess Amelia—I had seen; and she, also, was beloved and revered by all who knew her; but that was years ago, when I was young. Paris, now, has no inducements for me to return to it. My cottage is my home. My son is with me here, and surely happiness should sit enthroned upon our hearth-stone!" replied Madame Moreau.

Lady Laure Fontenier was about to speak again in answer, when the young man said, as he noticed the unusual pallor about his mother's lips and temples:

"Let us go into the garden, and show Lady Fontenier the flowers which you and I have cultivated so assiduously this summer. They are in full beauty now, and I think will please her ladyship's eyes, if she delight as much in viewing the works of nature, as she does in transferring them to her canvas."

"Oh, I should like it much, for indeed I am very fond of flowers; and I noticed that those in your garden were unusually fine and fragrant as I entered!" exclaimed Lady Fontenier.

A few moments later the three stood in the garden; and as Leone Moreau and his mother pointed out to their visitor the different varieties of blossoming flowers which grew within the garden attached to the cottage, she felt how happy must be the life of the two, passed in this quiet, peaceful employment, far away from the noise, turmoil, and unceasing care of the great city of her home.

An hour later, when she had left the cottage, and parted from Leone Moreau after he had accompanied her to the door of Dame Lobeau's home, she sought her chamber, and gave way to a pensive mood of thought. Lizette came in with a letter in her hand



[THE STRANGER'S APOLOGY.]

for her mistress, which roused her from this pleasant reverie. It brought only unwelcome tidings.

CHAPTER VIII.

The letter which Lizette brought her mistress proved to be from Count Fontenier, with one enclosed from the Duke d'Aumale, in which they both expressed a desire for her to return home within a few weeks. The duke was having alterations made at his chateau, and wanted the opinion of the future duchess with regard to the various improvements which the workmen were to make under the direction and taste of the Lady Laure. In three weeks they would begin to remodel that portion of the house, which would be given over especially to the lady. "Her comfort and ease and her slightest wish in the matter should be attended to first," the duke wrote, "and in every matter she should have unlimited license to direct all about the chateau, which was to be her future abode, just as she desired. I would come down for you," added the writer, "but am forced just at the time to be absent in another direction; but your sire assures me that he will himself go to attend you home, therefore I feel no anxiety about any mishap occurring to you on the way back to Paris. I shall see you immediately on my return, which will be at the earliest moment that I am released from the matter which calls me away. In the meantime, I wish that you should look about the chateau, and think of such alterations as would suit your taste. We will have them carried into execution as soon as I return."

This was a portion of the Duke d'Aumale's letter to the Lady Laure. It was the first she had received from her lover, whose image already had begun to grown dim within her mind. Now, as she perused it to its close, and realized fully that she was betrothed to the man who wrote it—that he addressed her as the future Duchess d'Aumale, and was looking to her for direction with regard to their future residence—the home which must be shared with him—there arose a sense of unhappiness and wretchedness in her heart, such as never had rested there before. She felt she could not become the Duke d'Aumale's wife; that it would be a sacrifice which would now go against all the best feelings of her soul. He was become distasteful to her. She had found of late—within the period of her stay in the cottage of her old nurse—that his image had grown dim, then faded away, till she no longer felt the tie which bound her to him. She had found pleasure and happiness in this quiet little hamlet; and now, there had come a sudden arousal, and this waking was taking her back, not only to the old unrest that had been with her ere she left her home, but it was adding a weight of wretchedness to her life.

Lady Laure Fontenier sat and thought over all these subjects, after reading the Duke d'Aumale's letter. She had perused her sire's first. That was short, only a few lines, in which he spoke of missing his pet from his chateau, and added, "that the Duke d'Aumale had been kind in coming often, to talk about her, and plan for the future change in the home to which he was to take her, after she had become the Duchess d'Aumale. Then," he added, "that he should come for her within the month, and that the enclosed letter of the duke's would explain why her stay in the little hamlet, which her letters assured him she liked so well, must be limited," and with a closing passage of affection to his daughter, Count Fontenier's letter was ended.

But we have said that Lady Laure sat in deep reverie, after she had become conversant with the letters of both her father and the Duke d'Aumale; and that her thoughts were not cheerful and pleasing. Such was the case. She had no wish to return home, and meet this lover, whom she now felt would be utterly distasteful to her. She realized how miserable she should become as his wife, and the idea of the approaching marriage became almost intolerable to her mind. And yet Lady Laure Fontenier was not fully aware why this change had come so rapidly in her feelings since she left Paris. She was blind yet to the state of her own heart towards another, who had helped to create this change. She could not waken yet. But there was coming a time when the mystery would be fully explained, and she would know what had brought it about.

Lizette came in again, while her mistress was in this mood. The girl had gone out, after delivering the letters to Lady Laure. Now, as she stood a moment, and gazed at the face of her mistress, and saw that a cloud, rather than sunshine, rested upon it, she speedily divined the cause, and she said to herself under her breath:

"I'll warrant a new box of gloves against the most charming hat that ever was made at Mademoiselle Placard's establishment, in Paris, that she has had some message from that old, gray-haired lover of hers—the Duke d'Aumale—and that is why she looks so sad and down-hearted. Poor, dear child! it is a sad shame that she has been doomed by the count to mate with a man old enough to be her father! I would not marry him, were he to ask me instead of my mistress, for I could never feel love for a man of my parent's years. But my mistress will not think of telling him so. She has always done just as the count has directed; and will do so now, I am afraid, even if it should break her tender heart in obeying him. If it were me now, I should prefer a lover like the handsome, young artist about here, who lives in that nice, little cottage, all surrounded by trees and flowers, and paints so charmingly. He looks as noble as any count or duke; and the lady who lives with him, and must be his mother, is more delicate and high-born looking than many a proud dame who shines at court. But yet, I suppose that my lady would not dare to think of this charming young man as a lover, for she is promised to the duke, and would not think of breaking her word. And more's the pity that she is so gentle and obedient, for I doubt not but that her heart has begun to think of him—this handsome artist—with feelings which she could never have towards the old gray-headed duke!"

The maid—Lizette—would have liked to utter these sentiments to her mistress, and then have given her a piece of advice, which would have been to discard the duke, and marry the young artist, should he ask her—and she fancied that there would be no doubt about this, could he know that a proposition of the kind would meet with anything but a refusal from the Lady Laure.

Lizette was a peculiar specimen of humanity. She was discerning, and her eyes had not been blinded to the fact that the two artists—Lady Laure and Leone Moreau—had unconsciously become interested in each other. She knew that the young man would never dare raise his thoughts to a count's daughter, thinking to marry her; and she knew, also, that her mistress was blinded yet to the state of her own heart; and that, were she awake, even, she would not be free to think of any other than the Duke d'Aumale as her future husband.

While all these thoughts passed in her mind, as she stood for a few moments near the door, and looked upon her mistress, the Lady Laure aroused from her reverie.

"My sire has sent for our return, Lizette. He will come for us in three short weeks, and we must go back to Paris again!"

She said this in a dreary tone, and without a smile. Lizette longed to throw herself at her loved mistress's feet, and entreat her to rebel, and give up the old Duke d'Aumale. But she restrained herself, and only said, in a tone she strove to render cheerful:

"We will be ready, then, my lady; your sire will find us prepared for his coming!"

(To be continued.)



[THE DOCTOR'S SUSPICIONS AROUSED.]

HONYCHURCH ROOKERY.

CHAPTER XV.

THE good physician of Cranstown had his hands full the next morning after Charlie Creyton's arrest. First he was hurried in to Amy Atherton, lying senseless. And on his return from seeing the poor girl safely into her own bed, with a careful nurse standing over her, he found Ben Crump in a perfect fever of impatience and excitement, waiting at his office for him to accompany him back to Creyton Farm.

He rode over to the farm, found that Mrs. Creyton, aroused from her slumber by a sharp scream below, had sprung out of bed, rushed to the door, and fallen heavily over Ben Crump.

"What foolishness!" grumbled he, as he examined the swollen ankle. "What was that silly girl screaming for—at a wasp or a toad?"

"She had just learned from a passing neighbour that my son was arrested for murder," answered Mary Creyton, calmly, although the drops of perspiration stood on her forehead, from the agony of the pain. "She is a nervous, excitable girl, and is very fond of us, and is not so very much to blame."

"And that lubberly Ben, why was he lying there on the floor, like a stick of wood?"

"Poor Ben!" said Mary Creyton, in a tone of sincere sympathy. "He was nervous and frightened after Charlie was taken away, and could not sleep anywhere else. Why don't you blame me, doctor, the really guilty one, and ask why I didn't know better than to rush out of the room, without looking to see what was before me?"

"I expect you have been already sufficiently punished," answered the doctor, with a grim smile. "If not, you are likely to be. No, the bones are not broken; but there is a sprain and bruise enough to keep you on your couch for a week or two."

She drew a long, quivering sigh.

"I wanted to go to my son at once. This is very unfortunate."

The doctor was vigorously at work over his spectacles.

"You think it would be impossible for me to be carried carefully in an easy carriage, just for one interview?"

"Positively suicidal, madam. You will make a very serious thing of what is likely to be coaxed into behaving respectably."

"Then I must stay at home. You think if I am perfectly quiet for ten days, I can go then?"

What an imploring accent in the tremulous voice! The doctor's eyes were blinking again.

"We'll try it, we'll try it then, madam, if I have to come myself, and see to it."

"Thank you, doctor! thank you! Perhaps you have heard from Charlie this morning?"

"Yes, I was called in," answered the doctor, reluctantly.

She took alarm at once.

"Oh, doctor, he was not ill? Charlie was not ill?"

"No, no, my dear soul. It was Miss Amy Atherton, who fainted there in the office. Your son was looking as brave, gallant, and noble as if—as if—I beg your pardon, Madam Creyton—as if there were not such black proofs against him."

"Dear Charlie!" said the mother, in a low, wistful voice. "I think this experience must be just the one thing needed to perfect his character, or it would not have been brought about. You believe he is innocent, doctor?"

"I should like to do so, madam," answered the doctor, bluntly; "but, according to the evidence, I don't see how it can be."

"You will see; every one will see!" said the mother, in a voice of solemn tenderness.

"You are acquainted with all the facts, I presume," said the doctor.

"No, with scarcely any; but I am acquainted with my son's character."

There was a quiet dignity in her manner which was now to her. The worthy physician looked at her sharply.

"I wonder why Amy Atherton was there?" continued Mary Creyton, in a musing voice.

"So does everybody!" observed the doctor, drily. "In fact, the busybodies have their hands full today. The poor child loves your son, there is no doubt of that. I shall not soon forget the woful anguish in her voice when her poor delirious eyes turned to mine, a little while back, as she kept groaning, 'Oh, Charlie! oh, Charlie!' They do say very hard things of your son, apart from this accusation of murder. They insist that he has used every possible art to win that innocent girl's love, for the sake of the fortune to come to her, if Miss Anderson remains unmarried. They half surmise that he even enticed her into helping him about this business. They do say hard things, and you would hear it in a sharper way than this, if you went abroad."

"Well," answered Mary Creyton, her eyes flashing indignantly, "they have also said hard things of me."

The doctor hemmed.

"Doctor Brown," said Mary, the crimson slowly gathering on her pale cheek. "I know what that cough signifies. You might have said, just as well, 'Well, madam, what can you expect?' But I know you, sir; you have a kind heart, and you are generous in your judgments, even. Can I trust you to keep silence, until the trial brings out what might have been known before?"

He looked at her in vague uneasiness, but answered promptly:

"I am not usually a chatterbox, Madam Creyton, and I can mind my own business, I hope."

"Will you be kind enough to pass me that Bible?"

He handed from the table the little book, carefully covered in leather, faded long ago by constant usage.

Mary Creyton's slender fingers lingered over it a moment with loving tenderness, then she untied the ribbon which fastened the cover, and slipped out a paper and handed it to the doctor.

It was a square paper, with an engraved edge of flowers, Cupids, &c. The doctor gravely unfolded it, read it through, examined the bold, legible signature, and turned towards his patient.

"Madam," said he, "you are a persecuted saint."

"You see there is no doubt. That clergyman is still living. He is a famous preacher, now; but he will not forget the ceremony, because it was the first he had ever performed."

"And that has been in your possession all this time, and you have borne the scorn and slights of all the town? Madam, you are a miracle of womanhood!"

"Doctor," said she, with one of her angelic smiles, "you see, now, that the town's judgment is sometimes at fault. As it has been with the mother, may it not be also with the son? At least, you will retract your insinuation that it was a mercenary motive which induced Charlie to seek Amy Atherton's love?"

The doctor gave another start.

"Why, sure enough! I had forgotten what else it meant. Good heavens, madam! Why do you not rush forth and proclaim it?"

"In good time, doctor, if my ankle will get well. Besides," she added, with a strong shudder, "there really was a murder, and we must find the truly guilty one."

"That ankle shall be faithfully tended," exclaimed the worthy physician, in a fever of penitence and sympathy.

"I have two devoted attendants. Both Ben and Jane are in an agony of self-reproach that it should have happened. They will give me faithful care."

"And you are not to fret yourself into a low fever."

The patient raised a pair of reproachful eyes.

"Have I borne so much, and shall I falter here? The care which has taken me safely thus far, will give me strength for all the rest. I must write to Charlie, and then I shall rest quietly."

The doctor drove slowly away, murmuring, as Ben had done, the night before:

"She is an angel! That woman is little short of an angel, and must sanctify every one who comes near her. How, then, can this son of hers be guilty of such a crime as murder?"

Before he reached home, he met a servant from Lakeville. Miss Anderson was indisposed, and wished to consult him.

"Is all Cranstown to be at my heels to-day?" queried the doctor, as he turned his horse's head towards Lakeville.

CHAPTER XVI.

Miss Anderson, from her lace-hung couch, smiled brilliantly as he entered, although the physician's keen eye read beneath it a slight shade of anxiety and nervousness.

"Good morning, Doctor Brown. I trust you didn't expect to find any very desperate case."

"We shall see. What are the symptoms?" replied the doctor, reaching out his hand for her wrist.

She gave him the left hand, languidly.

"Nothing particularly alarming, only I am conscious of a growing morbid nervousness. My imagination runs away with me. I have odd fancies, from which I can hardly get away; and last night they culminated in an odd attack. I actually, truly, doctor——" and she shuddered, and her eyes deepened to a greater blackness, "I really thought I saw a spectre, the living image of a dead man, right before my eyes. I screamed and fainted, and, since it has come to that, I concluded it was time that my unruly nerves were looked after."

The doctor listened quietly, and, without betraying it, watched closely every look and gesture.

"The pulse is somewhat excited; nothing remarkable, however. And how about the head? much pain?"

"I believe my headaches come on rather oftener than they used to do. Doctor, do you think a person can be conscious of two identities at one time? That is—I can't explain as lucidly as I should like—could I myself be shivering, feeling the gradual control of something else taking possession of me—know exactly when it is coming on, and just when it is ready to retire?"

She endeavoured to speak calmly; but despite her efforts, the colour rose to her cheek, her breath quickened, and she gave one of her peculiar, stealthy, side-long glances towards the right hand, which lay passive on the outside of the silken coverlet.

The doctor bent down his head, to hide a sudden gleam which shot across his eyes.

"People tell about such things, sometimes. I haven't much faith in them. Disordered nerves are mischievous enough for almost anything. I think your whole system wants strengthening," he answered, carelessly. "Now I will try your pulse again. No, your right hand, if you please."

"Take it," said she, "I don't feel as if I could lift it."

She tried to smile, but her lips whitened. The keen-eyed physician lost nothing.

"Hem," said he, "rather more fever than I supposed. A few prescriptions, faithfully followed, will set you right, I fancy. There's nothing to annoy your mind and retard your recovery, is there? Because that will neutralize my efforts."

She laughed, as she answered, in a light, sportive tone:

"What should there be, doctor, since I have no husband, nor disobedient daughter, nor anything of that sort?"

"What indeed!" And the doctor took out his pencil and his paper to write his prescription.

"Deal candidly with me, Doctor Brown," said she, suddenly, motioning for the nurse to leave the room. "Supposing I do not improve, what will this lead to?"

"Well, to be sure, how am I to know? It may take half-a-dozen ways of being revenged for your carelessness. But it is very important, Miss Anderson, that you should be free from excitement, and as calm and quiet as possible. I'm afraid you've been rather dissipated of late."

"I believe I have been rather gay. This season of the year, you know, while I am in the country, I enjoy company."

"It would be wise to give them polite instructions to remain at home. I am very particular, Miss Anderson, that you be free from every excitement. I would recommend, also, a generous but simple diet, and avoidance of wine, which is probably, however, an unnecessary caution."

He asked himself half-a-dozen times, when at home, revolving the conversation, did Miss Anderson blush, or was it only the flush from the fit of coughing which seized her, as he was making this remark?

"Have you any other suggestions? pray be particular to remember everything," she said, in a moment more. "Supposing—supposing something like what happened last night should be coming on, and I should know it. Can't you give me something to take, to drive it off, to bring me to myself?"

The doctor put another question.

"Would it always be the same appearance? Is it always one form of evil that you dread?" he asked, eagerly.

She looked at him with a keen, searching glance, from under her drooping lashes, and answered back an untruth.

"Why, no. Though my own distress and annoying sensations are always the same."

"You can take one of the powders immediately; and though I want you to be free from company, I would like you to have always a quiet companion. Such moods come, do they not, in solitude?"

"Most frequently," answered she, with a slight shiver. "Doctor Brown, you must look after me. If you like, we will have a physician from London, but I trust myself with you. Save me from drifting you know whither, and believe me, your reward shall not be mean."

"I will do everything in my power. Rest and a quiet mind, however, are the most potent aids. And now allow me to wish you good day."

He shook her hand, not unmindful that he again received the left hand, and repeating his charges to the housekeeper, with a few questions concerning Miss Anderson's parents, drove off, once more, in the direction of his house.

"It's odd, extremely odd!" muttered the worthy doctor. "Look at these two women, now. One of them has borne everything—disgrace, shame, unutterable anguish—scarcely, for years, above poverty, and here, under the last terrible blow of her only son's arrest for murder, she stands up calm, steadfast, serene, bearing that acute pain of her ankle like a heroine, and seemingly able to support, with that wonderful strength of hers, half-a-dozen faltering hearts. And there's Miss Anderson, rich, pampered, flattered, every trouble, one would think, smoothed out of her pathway, with a fine healthy constitution, every opportunity for enjoyment of life, and here she is actually hastening towards insanity for the very lack of any stamina to resist a little nervousness."

CHAPTER XVII.

It must be admitted that when at last Mary Creyton was able to bear the ride to the county gaol, she found her son looking thin, pale, and careworn. For all his professed confidence and his brave heart, Charlie's trouble had worn upon him. The day of trial was rapidly approaching, and now that he was called upon to make out a direct line of defence for his lawyer, he felt how momentous might be the result, if the promised witness should not appear, and he could not shake off a nervous dread, and foreboding of evil. The lawyer was angry and indignant at his client's reticence, and almost inclined to believe his guilt. He was with the prisoner when Mary Creyton gained admittance, and said, earnestly, as he shook her hand:

"I hope you will prevail upon this young man to allow me to ask more time, so that we may get the testimony of Miss Atherton. He very peremptorily refuses to summon her as one of his witnesses, although he admits that she can clear him," said the lawyer.

Mary's two hands were locked in Charlie's firm clasp, and she scarcely heard a word of the speech.

"Oh, mother, dear mother! I have missed you so much!" said Charlie, with a strong effort repressing the sob in his throat. "Even your letters could not atone for your smile and encouraging looks. Are you quite recovered?"

"Enough to warrant good Doctor Brown's permission to visit you every other day. I grieved most for the accident because it kept me from you. Charlie, you have not borne it as well as I hoped. You look worn and thin."

"I miss the fresh air, and my stirring active life," answered Charlie. "And I am troubled about Amy. I hear nothing satisfactory. Can you tell me if she be really improving?"

"Doctor Brown brings me regular bulletins. He has strong hopes of her ultimate recovery. But I should judge she is still very weak—too weak, in fact, to exert herself at all, in mind or body. He is trying to find out which it is of the parents who has such unfortunate influence over her, so as to forbid that one to visit her. At present, neither is allowed in the sick room, except when she is sleeping."

"Dear, generous little Amy!" murmured Charlie his proud lip quivering. "She has borne enough; she shall not be dragged into court."

"But, my dear sir, what will you do without her evidence? What you have furnished me with is not worth a straw, and your own statement goes for nothing with the jury," interrupted the lawyer, testily.

"I know it. But there is one I can call who will be worth a score of common witnesses. Mother, dear, you wrote me he promised to come. I wish I need not be so painfully anxious about it. His failure to appear will be life or death with me."

Mary Creyton bent down and kissed his hand.

"I think there is no fear, Charlie. If he be alive, he will come."

"And if anything should happen to him," said Charlie, with a shudder, "nothing I could offer would have a feather's weight against the black array of circumstantial evidence."

"Heaven will take care of him, and of you, Charlie. And, besides, you will have your mother's testimony."

"For what?" asked the lawyer, eagerly.

"My testimony to my son's character, and a revelation which may throw light upon the mysterious nature of this murder."

"Am I to have it now, madam?"

"Not yet. I will wait for the important witness to appear. It is a trying ordeal to face a court of justice. I would make sure that it is absolutely necessary."

The lawyer shrugged his shoulders. Was there ever before such indifference to so threatening a fate? What sort of a plea should he be able to get up, when even the little material in his hands was taken away?"

"Whatever you say and do," said Charlie Creyton, "do not allude to the shred of silk found in the doorway."

"But that might throw suspicion on another party—a woman, anybody to divert it from yourself," said the lawyer, testily.

"I tell you it would hurt me more than anything else you could say or do, and it must not be."

"I think you had better conduct your defence yourself," said the indignant lawyer.

"It might be as well," returned Charlie, composedly. "If my witness come, I shall need nothing more, and if he does not come, the most consummate skill in the land won't help me."

"Where is this witness? There is still time enough to seek him, and make sure that he will come. Where shall I go for him?"

"Heaven knows, but I do not," answered Charlie.

"Nor you?" interrogated the lawyer of Mary Creyton.

She shook her head gravely, but not despairingly.

"What is his name? I can set a detective at work, or advertise."

"I do not even know his name. Did he tell you, mother?"

"Nothing, whatever, about himself."

"A very secure witness!" ejaculated the lawyer.

"You don't know where to find him, or what to call him. Could you tell me how he looks, even?"

"Gray hair, and long snowy whiskers, a rather stooping form, and——" began Charlie.

But Mary Creyton interrupted hastily, in a half-frightened voice:

"Oh, no, Charlie—black hair, very short, and black moustache."

"Well," exclaimed the lawyer, with a short, contemptuous laugh. "I think your witness is a myth, altogether, and that, as you say, heaven only knows anything about him. I am amazed, young man, that you will trifle with so frail a chance for life. I assure you, there is about as much chance of your coming into possession of—of—why, of that splendid Livingstone estate in your town, as of obtaining an acquittal from the most lenient jury, on such evidence as you have given me to offer."

"We won't be down-hearted, for all that, will we, Charlie?" said the mother, crossing to his side, with a proud, significant smile. "And we will take his words as a good omen. If heaven knows, it is enough for us to trust that he will be brought forth at the right hour."

"What are these people?" muttered the lawyer, as he walked away, "simple, credulous fanatics, or are they pure, heroic souls, such as we read about, and so seldom see?"

Cranstown was not troubled by the lawyer's doubts. A ferment of eager excitement stirred the town from one end to the other, and very few indeed were they who raised a protesting voice against the clamour of horror and indignation. Doctor Brown, it is true, puzzled the people, by now and then turning upon them sharply, in the midst of their angry vituperation against the hapless Charlie, and asking, with a quizzical smile, if they were willing he should make a note of the remark, for future reference.

There were others—generous, honest people, who had been made aware of the sterling worth and unostentatious nobleness of soul of these two, who spoke up bravely, and still clung to the hope that all would yet be happily explained. But the majority of the people were ready to applaud the conviction and sentence which should give their young townsman to the gallows. There were many who had always been indignant at Charlie Creyton's happy ease and free independence, so unbecoming, said they, for one in his position; and those were glad to turn, now, and cite their old disapprobation, as sure proof of great sagacity and discernment.

Mr. Atherton was as much annoyed by the floating rumours, vaguely connecting his daughter with the transactions of that fatal night, as he was troubled by Amy's illness, and certain unwelcome suspicions of his own. He followed up a story about the shred of black silk, and obtained from Mr. Bradley what Nancy had told him concerning the burning of the apron.

Poor Nancy was frightened out of what little sense she naturally possessed, and with sobs and tears promised to affirm that it was only an old black silk necktie, which her master had thrown into the stove. He carried daily reports to Miss Anderson, who found magical means for silencing the unpleasant talk concerning the future heiress of Lakeville. They were almost equally anxious that the trial should be over, and the suspense ended. Miss Anderson kept herself very carefully secluded, according to the doctor's orders, and declared that she steadily avoided all excitement. Nevertheless she grew thin and pale, and had the appearance of one who was secretly consuming all her vitality and strength in feverish restlessness.

She saw no company except the doctor, Mr. Atherton, and Ray Gilbert. The latter, indeed, spent nearly all his time at Lakeville, enjoying its luxurious ease, and willing to read, sing, and talk, for the invalid's amusement. And Miss Anderson never seemed so quiet and contented as in his presence. When Ray sauntered away to the village, Miss Anderson rode in her luxurious carriage, and the coachman began presently to wonder why their route always led them past the lonely, quiet house at Creyton Farm.

He couldn't help perceiving, likewise, what keen, swift glances his mistress gave towards those humble windows.

Mary Creyton was coming from the village, once, and they met, face to face. The poor traduced mother of a boy in gaol, awaiting trial for murder, and the fashionable and stately lady, in her luxurious carriage.

Their eyes met. Miss Anderson put a stern, threatening, annihilating fire into hers, but Mary's were not lowered. Something in that expression added a new alarm to Miss Anderson's already morbid dread of impending evil.

"Rest and quiet, rest and quiet!" muttered she, that night, when Doctor Brown left her. "I shall never obtain it until that trial is over. What new spectre is this in my path? Absurd! The oath he has kept so many years, why should it be broken now? Besides, she does not suspect. She does not dream—pshaw! I am tormenting myself again. Be still, be still, restless mind! you must be calm!"

And then the eager hand was reached forth towards the ruby and silver flask, and was drawn shrinkingly back.

"Ray, Ray, where are you?" Miss Anderson would cry, imploringly.

And Ray would come, wondering, and yet flattered by this growing need of him, taking foolish pride even in the whispered comments of the servants, who could no longer be blind to the infatuation of their mistress. Ray would stroke her hand softly—her left hand, she would never, on any consideration, allow him to touch the right—or would smooth her forehead with one or two light, caressing touches, and sit down beside her, and sing or read. And presently the set, white look would fade away from her face. She would heave a long and tremulous sigh, give him a grateful, inexpressibly tender smile, and say:

"Ah now you have exorcised the uncasy spirit. I am well and strong again."

Such scenes occurred frequently. Ray gave the doctor a brief sketch, and received a grave nod.

"She must be humoured. There is a crisis of some sort coming. My efforts seem like a straw stemming a tempestuous ocean, about as hopeless I fear. But I can t see what keeps her in such a fever, for her quiet is all a pretence. It is well there is some one with her who has a soothing influence. You are the gentleman chosen by her to marry the heiress. I understand, then that she looks upon you like one of the family, and see no occasion for the foolish talk of the servants. But it is well to humour her until this strange excitement passes off; after which I would advise your cautious withdrawal."

Ray Gilbert had the grace to colour a little, and only bowed a silent response.

"I spoke to your adopted father about something the housekeeper hinted; but he seemed in no way concerned. He said Miss Anderson was always fond of you, from your boyhood, and that she called you and Amy Atherton her children."

Ray bowed again; but there was a sparkle of anger in his eye, though he assumed a careless tone.

"You are a good fellow, doctor, and mean well, but I assure you that your anxiety is quite superfluous. Miss Anderson and I understand each other perfectly. When I am married to Amy Atherton, I shall be her protector and best friend. It is natural our friendship should be warm and intimate."

"Then you are Miss Atherton's accepted lover?" queried the doctor, with a keen glance into his face.

Ray's face was haughty, now.

"I am to marry Miss Atherton, yes, sir."

"Had you seen her very frequently before her illness? Did you understand her sentiments thoroughly?"

"Sir!"

And Ray did his best to put on a superb air of insulted dignity.

"I asked if you understood the poor child's mind—her heart, rather?"

"It seems to me, Doctor Brown, you are forgetting your province. What is it to you how well Amy and I understand each other?"

"A great deal, young man. I am the poor girl's physician, and if I find her mind requires more careful doctoring than her physical frame, shall I neglect any opportunity to receive all the light I can concerning it? One thing is very evident. Amy Atherton's heart is bound up in Charlie Creyton, poor fellow!"

"Poor fellow!" echoed Ray, angrily. "Are you wont to waste your sympathies on murderers?"

"No, nor upon fortune-hunters," returned the doctor, coolly, in no way discomposed by the rage into which the young gentleman had worked himself. "But there are exceptions to all classes. Charlie Creyton must be proved guilty before he will receive my judgment. It is a pretty fair proof of his worth that such a girl as Amy Atherton should love him. Were I you, it would require fifty such fortunes as that of the Livingstones to induce me to come between them."

"When I am in need of prescription or advice, Doctor Brown, I will come for it," retorted Ray, walking off.

The doctor rode over to Mr. Atherton's at a brisk trot.

"I'll get to the bottom of the matter," said he. "I won't have that girl murdered under my hands. Graham Atherton is such a genial, clever fellow, I can't believe he would force his daughter's inclination. And the mother, though one of those still, shy women, you don't know how to take, seems too tenderly devoted to her to be willing to sacrifice her happiness. I must e'en put a few home questions, that, when the poor child recovers consciousness, I shall know how to deal with her."

Fortunately for the good doctor's kindly intentions, Mr. Atherton was not at home; and his wife, after receiving his friendly but grave explanation of the danger which threatened, and the extreme delicacy and caution required in dealing with his patient, burst into a flood of relieving tears, and told him all.

"Why," said the indignant doctor, "one would think we had gone back to the days of barbarism and despotism. You shall lose nothing by this confidence, my dear madam. I have an idea. A very crude and bewildered glimmering of a suggestion, but we will see what comes of it. Now let me take a look at the patient. You think she is perfectly conscious of everything going on about her?"

"I certainly do; only she is too weak to exert herself at all."

"Possibly, too, she shrinks from coming again into trouble. If we had only good news about that trial, it would be worth while to rouse her. It would be worth more than all my medicine-chest, and your nursing."

"When does the trial begin?"

"In two days. I expect Cranstown will be depopulated. It's curious how such an excitement will run away with people. Everybody will be at the court, though they be obliged to crawl on their hands and knees to get there—even Miss Anderson, for aught I know. I wonder, I wonder, if I had got anywhere near the skeleton in that closet? Heigh-ho! this is a curious world, and a physician sometimes gets at the queerest part of it!"

(To be continued.)

THE following is the bill of fare of the banquet given by the Prince Imperial to 500 apprentices at Brest:—Potage au vermicelle; hors-d'œuvre, beurre, radis, cornichons, anchois; saucissons, jambonneaux, bœuf piqué à l'écarlate, noix de veau au jus, gigots de mouton rôtis, jambons décorés, salades; pièces montées assorties; dessert, fruit secs, petits-fours, manqués décorés; vins, a bottle of table-wine for two, and a bottle of bordeaux among eight. This contrasts oddly with the magnificent repast at five francs a head which was given at Nantes as an ordinary *table d'hôte*, and astonished all foreign civilization to read it.

MABEL WAYTE.

"Is that really you, Gerald Silingsby? Just come in time, old fellow; I'm going down to Riker's Glen, fishing. Jones says there are some magnificent trout hiding away under the roots of those old cedars. Come—it's just one of those sultry, sunless days that we shall be sure of a bite!"

Gerald Silingsby, a tall, symmetrically-made young fellow, with brilliant hazel-brown eyes and clustering dark rings of hair, looked with a sort of patronizing toleration upon young Charley Wayte, as he stood on the piazza steps, rejoicing in a broad-brimmed hat and a redundancy of patent fishing-tackle.

"Not to-day, Charley; it's too warm. Is your sister at home?"

"My sister!" Wayte's voice expressed the most unmitigated scorn. What were all the sisters in creation, compared with a day in Riker's Glen and a full basket of gleaming, gold-spotted trout? "Yes—Mabel's in the sitting-room, I believe; and there's a lot of girls with her. Foolish, chattering things, all of 'em—I can't make either head or tail of their talk. Come, old fellow—you can take your pole along, and I've got tackle for both!"

But Silingsby still resisted the tempting offer, and Charley Wayte went whistling down the gravelled walk, mentally deciding that "Silingsby was getting to be an awful muff about Mabel."

Poor Gerald—he had better have accepted Charley's eager invitation, and busied himself in the dense shadows of the deep ravine called Riker's Glen! For sometimes it is better to be absent than neglected!

Miss Mabel Wayte sat demurely among her young friends, engaged in an elaborate piece of worsted work, and apparently a great deal too busy to notice such a commonplace thing as a young man, save by the merest inclination of her head. She had played with the ball of Gerald Silingsby's heart so long that when it came rolling to her feet, it was the most natural thing in the world to take no notice of it. Was he, then, to place it so utterly at her capricious mercy? I am not so certain of that. You could no more have helped falling in love with Mabel Wayte than he, had you once been exposed to the wondrous witchery of her melting eyes, the charm of her delicious blushes and lingering, low-dropped words. There was something mesmeric about this slender, dark-orbed beauty that made men bow down at her coming like the Eastern worshippers of the sun—a something which women marvelled at, and could not understand. Her hair was black as night, with a purplish shine upon the ripples that were gathered low in her neck; her skin was dark, with a tender peachy-bloom upon either cheek, and lips as scarlet as a dead-ripe nectarine—and her eyes, half-concealed by the natural droop of their heavy, white lids, were full of hidden, glimmering light, such as you sometimes see in deep, translucent pools, half overgrown by water-lilies and tangled rushes. Minnie Aubray had at one time horrified her companions by declaring that Mabel Wayte's eyes were like the sleepy orbs of the beautiful, cruel Bengal tiger they had seen in the menagerie once! Mabel had laughed, but she had visibly shuddered too. And perhaps there was some resemblance.

Gerald Silingsby thought those frivolous girls would never go. They stayed to lunch—one of those dainty lunches that Miss Wayte's housekeeper knew so well how to get up—iced claret, chocolate frothing in its tiny cups, biscuit-sandwiches, and pound cake, cut in thin, golden slices, with china saucers of cream, heaped high with great, scarlet strawberries, whose fragrance filled the room. Mabel was a little epicure in everything—an artist in the merest details of every-day life. And after lunch Gerald was pressed into the service to read poetry to them, sufficiently capacious to silence them effectually, until he wished Byron and all the rest at the bottom of the Red Sea, or any other body of water.

But who ever knew the course of true love to run according to rule and plummet?

Finally they scattered away, one by one, and

Gerald and Mabel were alone together in the room, where golden bars of sunset-light played fitfully on the matting, and the wet leaves of the ivy without shook bright showers down at every stir of the wind. For there had been a magnificent thunder-storm, with driving sheets of rain and sudden gusts of wind, and fiery arrows cleaving the purple-black heavens, and much pretty terror among the assembled guests.

Alone together! The moment had come to which Gerald had feverishly looked forward all day, and now, how unsatisfactory it was. Had ever lover a more capricious, provoking, little mistress than Mabel was? She would not understand. She played with his heart as the beautiful Bengal tiger might have sported with a trembling, wounded gazelle.

"Mabel, you are cruel!" he cried, passionately.

She looked up, with the sleepy, glimmering orbs half-closed, an electric flash shooting through the lashes, then her eyes fell to her worsted work again.

"Seven blues, one orange, two scarlets, and a blue," she murmured, thoughtfully, with her head on one side.

"Mabel," ejaculated Silingsby, "I will be answered."

"And then an olive-green," sighed Mabel, softly. "But, after all, Abraham's face is going to look just like all other worsted-work faces. I did think there was some little expression in the last pattern. Gerald, please hand me the scissors."

Poor Gerald ruthlessly withheld the scissors from the little extended hand.

"You shall not talk of worsted work and scissors until you give me some definite answer."

"Then I shall have to bite my threads, and—oh, dear! it is so bad for the teeth."

She made a grimace, as she snipped off the bit of wool with tiny, pearl-white teeth. Silingsby didn't know whether it would have afforded him the most satisfaction to kiss her or box her ears.

"Mabel."

"Yes, Gerald," (in the meekest of tones.)

"Have you no heart at all?"

"Dear me! What a question to ask! Don't I keep a poodle, and two doves, and a cage full of canaries? and don't I stop to kiss all the babies, and cry over all the tales of misery and distress?"

"Nonsense, Mabel!" His brow was growing darker. Mabel's eyelids drooped lower and lower. Apparently she was deriving intense satisfaction from their colloquy.

"I have allowed myself to be trifled with long enough, Mabel. One way or the other I must have my fate decided to-day."

Mabel yawned. "I wish I could furnish you with a nice old fortune-teller, in a red cloak, to decide it for you, Mr. Silingsby."

"Will you give me my answer, Mabel?"

She straightened up her lithe, willowy figure with a sudden motion.

"Please ring the bell. I forgot to order tea, and papa will be home in ten minutes."

He rose, quietly, rang the bell, and bade her good evening. Apparently the slender thread of his patience had given way at last.

"Are you going, Gerald?"

"I am going, Mabel, and I shall not return."

He stood an instant, to give her the opportunity to call him back to her side, if she wished to do so; but she only stuck her worsted needle ruthlessly through the Patriarch Abraham's nose, and folded her work, and so they parted.

And Mabel gathered up her bright-coloured work, singing softly to herself, with a curious smile dimpling her mouth.

"I wish I was a man," said Miss Mabel, half aloud. "I know I wouldn't make such a goose of myself for the best woman that ever lived. Not return, indeed. He'll be back again to-morrow morning. Oh, dear! where did that provoking little ball of pink floss roll to? And Abraham's colour won't be worth a pin without it!"

Fifteen minutes later Squire Wayte came in, stamping the wet off his boots, and rubbing his hands together.

"Why, how dark it is! Where are your lights, child? What a thunderstorm we have had. The little bridge at Riker's Glen is washed completely away. The banks have been shelved in, they say."

"The bridge in Riker's Glen?"

Mabel dropped the basket of work from her hand. She remembered with a sudden start of unsyllabled fear that Gerald Silingsby had plunged into the woods, taking the very path that led through the Glen. She knew that it was dark even in the open landscape, how much more gloomy in the tangled shadows of the Glen!

"He will not know that the bridge is gone—he will miss his footing and be dashed in pieces!" was the wild fear that rose up to her brain. "Oh, Gerald, Gerald!—but perhaps it is not too late to save him yet."

And before the astonished squire could venture a word of question or remonstrance, Mabel had fluttered out into the twilight, and vanished!

Down through the lovely glen-path, heedless of the sharp stones that cut through her dainty kid slippers—reckless of briars that caught at her garments, and showers of moisture that descended from dripping bough and tangled undergrowth—Mabel Wayte hurried on, with beating heart and face that was alternately flushed and colourless. If she should be too late!

And then it rose up before her like the blank wastes of a dreary desert—what life would be without the faithful love and worship of Gerald Silingsby?

But Mabel was only a weak girl after all, and her strength began to fail and her limbs to yield beneath her ere she had gone half way. A mad impulse of despair took possession of her heart, but the next instant it was supplanted by a ray of hope.

"Charley! thank heaven, there is Charley! He will hasten on—he will warn Gerald."

How thankful she felt in her heart for the piscatory mania which kept her brother so late beside the sunless pools beneath the tangled cedar trees! She would never laugh at Charley again for his devotion to trout fishing, she thought as she hurried on.

"Don't start, Charley, it is only I," she faltered, breathless and agitated, as she laid her trembling hand on his shoulder. "Oh, I am so glad I have found you! Hasten to the Glen bridge—quick! it is washed away, papa says, and—and Gerald has gone home that way, and he will be killed! Oh, Charley! why don't you start?"

With all the strength of her little hands, she endeavoured to drag him up from his lazily reclining posture.

"He will be dashed in pieces—he will die, and never know how dearly I love him! I know I have been cruel to him. Charley—you have told me so a score of times—but I love him, and he will be killed! Oh, Charley, Charley, for my sake, hasten to his rescue!"

Her passionate outcry died away into a low hysterical sob; her hands fell powerless by her side; but she resolved, with set teeth, that she would not be weak and faint away as any other woman might have done.

"Mabel!"

Surely that was not Charley's boyish voice—it was a deeper, more tremulous accent! it was not Charley's figure that rose in the dim, purple-shadowed twilight, and folded her weak form in its close, strong embrace.

"Mabel, my treasure! my brave-hearted little white dove! half an hour hence, I did not care whether I lived or died; now my life is precious beyond words to me!"

"Gerald!" she faltered, with a sudden backward rush to face, neck, and brow, of the blood which had but now curdled icily around her heart.

"Nay, never struggle to get away, little one," he murmured tenderly, "you have confessed in my own ear that you love me; it is too late now to retract. Come, your hair is wet, your dress is drenched with dew and rain; let me lead you home again."

"And leave a fellow all by himself—much obliged to you!" grumbled a well-known voice, as Mr. Charley Wayte came scrambling up the steep bank. "I didn't think you'd serve me such a mean trick, Gerald, as to drop the line, after I'd got it all disentangled so neatly—the best tackle in the county, too! It's all your fault, Mabel—hallo, what are you crying about?"

"Hush, Charley, your sister is nervous—she has had a fright!"

"A fright—what about? Girls are always getting frightened."

And Charley marched homewards in sullen dignity, leaving Mr. Silingsby and Mabel to follow at their leisure.

There was a new and softened light in Mabel's wondrous eyes that night, as she presided at the cosy tea-table. She had betrayed herself, and yet she did not care!

The beautiful Bengal tiger has his master, and Mabel Wayte had found hers!

A. R.

Arithmetical Prophecy.—Figures are said to be incontestable; and, perhaps, that is one of the reasons why prophecy flies so much to arithmetic. Some of these calculations are well known; and here is the latest of the kind. What is wanted is to determine the date when the Imperial rule shall end in France. Let us go back, then, to the reign of Louis Philippe for facts which may help us in the calculation. Louis Philippe ascended the throne in 1830. If we take that as a fixed point, we shall find that by adding it to certain numbers, the result will give the year 1848, when the reign of the Orleans family came to an end. Thus, Louis Philippe was born in 1773. The ciphers of this date added together make 18; and if you add 18 to 1830 it brings us precisely to 1848. Again, his Queen was born in 1782. The ciphers of the date added together make 18; and, 18 added to 1830 makes 1848. Or, once again, the King and Queen were married in 1809. The ciphers of this year also make 18; and, if we treat this amount as before, it will yield the same result. Now let us proceed in the same fashion to deal with the Empire. It was proclaimed in 1852. The Emperor was born in 1808. If we add the ciphers of the latter date together, and add the result to the date of 1852, we obtain the figures 1869. Again the Empress was born in 1826. Proceed as before, and the result is 1869. The Emperor and Empress were married in 1853. Still repeat the calculation, and the result is 1869. Last of all, take the date of the Revolution—1848. Manipulate its figures in the same fashion as the others—the sum total is 21; and this added to 1848 makes 1869. Is it not perfectly clear, therefore, that the Empire will come to an end in 1869?

STATISTICS.

Cotton Growing in India.—According to the latest statistics on cotton growing in India, at the end of last year, there were in the Madras Presidency 1,361,474 acres under cotton crops, as compared with 1,229,531 acres in 1866. For indigo, 111,484 acres in 1867, as compared with 80,911 acres in 1866. At Bellary the increase in cotton growing is estimated at 74,368 acres; at Kurnool, 72,499 acres; and at Tinnevelly, 12,638 acres.

Mont Cenis Tunnel.—During the months of January and February the progress made at the Mont Cenis tunnel was 20.225 metres, of which 130·30 metres was at the Bardonnèche, and 98·95 metres at the Modane end. Of this, the total advancement was 106·20 metres during the month of January, of which the progress at the Bardonnèche end was 54·30 metres, and 51·90 metres at Mordane. In February, the total progress was 96·05 metres, of which 49 metres were at Bardonnèche, and 47·05 metres at Mordane. The position of the tunnel up to the 1st of March was as follows:—South end, Bardonnèche, 4·827·80 metres; north end, Mordane, 3·221·10; total length of tunnelling, 8·048·90; remaining to be done, 4·171·10; total length of tunnel, 12·220·00. The following is the advancement and expenditure for each year since the commencement of this gigantic undertaking to the end of 1867. The expenditure for 1867 has not yet been published:—Length of tunnel completed: 1857-1858, Bardonnèche, 284·85 metres; Modane, 212·75 metres; total during the year, 497·60 metres; total length, 497·60 metres; amount, 3,369,246 francs: 1859, Bardonnèche, 236·35 metres; Modane, 132·75 metres; total during year, 369·10 metres; total length, 866·70 metres; amount, 1,630,753 francs: 1860, Bardonnèche, 203·30 metres; Modane, 139·50 metres; total during year, 343·30 metres; total length, 1,210·00 metres; amount, 2,500,000 francs: 1861, Bardonnèche, 170·00 metres; Modane, 193·00 metres; total during year, 363·00 metres; total length, 1,573·00 metres; amount, 3,000,000 francs: 1862, Bardonnèche, 380·00 metres; Modane, 243·00 metres; total during year, 623·00 metres; total length, 2,196·00 metres; amount, 2,000,000 francs: 1863, Bardonnèche, 426·00 metres; Modane, 376·00 metres; total during year, 802·00 metres; total length, 2,998·00 metres; amount, 3,500,000 francs: 1864, Bardonnèche, 621·00 metres; Modane, 467·00 metres; total during year, 1,088·00 metres; total length, 4,086·00 metres; amount, 6,552,254 francs: 1865, Bardonnèche, 765·30 metres; Modane, 458·40 metres; total during year, 1,223·70 metres; total length, 5,309·70 metres; amount, 5,502,738 francs: 1866, Bardonnèche, 812·70 metres; Modane, 212·29 metres; total during year, 1,024·99 metres; total length, 6,334·69 metres; amount, 5,644,982 francs: 1867, Bardonnèche, 824·50 metres; Modane, 687·46 metres; total during year, 1,511·96 metres; total length, 7,846·65. The probable cost of the work was estimated at 70,000,000 francs (2,800,000*l.*); of this amount 33,699,973 francs were expended up to the end of 1866.

Tourists to Italy will be pleased to hear that after many delays it is officially announced that the railway over Mount Cenis will be opened in May, 186 . The line will be worked by twelve engines, each weighing twenty tons, which have been made by Gouin and Co., of Paris. The defect in the rocking shafts of the engines first made, is said to have been entirely overcome in the new engines.



[GRANT ELLIS CUTTING THE INITIALS.]

THE LETTERS ON THE ELM.

WHAT old, old elms they were. Moss-grown and gnarled, intertwining their long branches, like friendly giants embracing; creaking and groaning mysteriously on winter nights when the wind blew, fluttering coyly in their fresh young foliage on early spring mornings. Beautiful always, whether the summer sunshine kissed them, rich with leaves, or whether they stood, brown and naked, in a bath of silvery December moonlight.

The prettiest spot in all pretty Hopburn was Elm Grove.

On one of those old trunks you might find yet, deep sunk within the added rind of years, a cleverly-carven true lover's knot, tying together an E and an O. Perhaps were you cunning in greenwood lore, you might tell how long ago the sharp knife trimmed the bark into those ciphers; but you could not tell how it wrought, or what hand held it, or what thoughts were in the brain, at whose bidding the hand worked, unless I told you. Yes, I—I only.

Sometimes, when the grove is very lonely, I go there and look; and it is as though I opened the pages of a diary, for memories return, forgotten at all other times, and I see and hear as I saw and heard when those letters were carved, the face and voice of Olive Olney.

I wonder whether a girl was ever in love who did not at some moment write down by stealth her lover's name and her own, for the joy of looking at them together; or a boy who did not once, at least, cut them together somewhere. I had come out into the grove on purpose, and never at my work, for I was a carver and gilder by trade, had I taken more pains with curve or flourish than I did with those two letters—O, for Olive, and E, for Ellis, my own name. Now, whether I meant to link the Olive Ellis together, as it would stand if I could ever win her, I do not know. It was only my name and hers I thought of at first, but when it flashed across me, I turned scarlet alone in the elm grove, though I worked on more eagerly.

It was a careful bit of carving, but I meant to cut it all away when I had looked enough, and was standing, knife in hand, when down on my shoulders came a plump palm, and a voice said in my ear:

"Let's look at your work, Grant Ellis; what is it you are carving there?"

"It was Olive's voice. She had become behind me unawares, and I turned to find her all aglow with exercise and fun; her hair a crinkled mass of jet under her hat, with blue ribbons; her eyes dancing like two stars, ready as ever to torment me.

I placed myself against the elm, hiding the letters with my broad shoulders. I laughed at her, and said

"You can't see, Olive. It's a secret."

"A secret cut into the bark of a tree in such a place as this. I can come back and see it in an hour when you are gone."

"I shall cut it out before I go."

"Then I'll see it now."

I stood resolute, as a screen to my handiwork.

She sat down on a green knoll.

"I will look at that before I go," she said.

"At your peril, Olive."

"Eh—why?"

I looked at her. The fire in her eye burnt me to the heart.

"You will see?" I asked.

"Yes."

I stepped back. She came nearer.

"O," she said, "and E, and a true-love knot."

"O E might stand for Olive Ellis," said I. "I meant it for that; will you take the name, and me, such as I am, with it?"

And that which I never hoped to have courage to utter, was said, and over.

She paused and looked down. I crept nearer to her. I took her hand. She let me keep it. I kissed it. She did not take it from me. Then I kissed her, and knew that she loved me.

What a silly pair we were. How thoughtless of all prudence young folks are. I was as poor as one with health and youth, some education, and a trade, could be. She at once rich and poor, the pampered pet of a wealthy old spinster, who had indulged her ever since she took her from her dying mother's arms, but who could leave her penniless, if it were her whim to do so. And Miss Noble's whims were many, and not all amiable.

As for me, she had as soon fancied the beggar at the church-porch a suitor for Olive's hand. I sung in the choir with her, it is true, and the village society was homely and well mixed; but Miss Noble prided herself on aristocratic descent, and had high views for her niece. With her will, Olive would never be the wife of a village carver and gilder. We knew that, and the first words Olive spoke as we walked towards her home together, were:

"Aunt Noble will be furious."

At that, a vision of the grim old maiden lady flitted before me, daunting me a little.

She certainly had no right to take Olive from me; but perhaps she had the power.

I caught Olive's hand.

"Will she be cruel to us?" I asked.

"She will have her own way, if she can."

"Well?"

"And I will have my own way, too," said Olive. "I am as fond of it as she can be of hers."

And I looked in her face, and saw that she was not to be easily won from her will; that she was no timid girl, to be frightened into obedience

So I let the future go, and lived only in the present; every evening Olive met me, and we walked in Elm Grove, and talked as only lovers, young as we were, can talk together; and built such air castles as only such as we were ever build. Miss Noble never guessed; but there was one who did, Nora Shaw, my old master's daughter. When I first began to learn his trade, I thought the girl pretty and good; but after I knew Olive there was no other beauty for me, and before long I saw Nora as she was—not good, not pure at heart, venom in her temper, and a sly leaning towards ill, that made me shudder to think I was so nearly loving her once, for her red cheeks and blue eyes. Perhaps I had shown my liking in those old days too plainly, for Nora Shaw was angry at me for my neglect, and jealous of my love for Olive. She revenged herself by jeering at me, setting the other lads to tease me, and talking before me of Miss Noble's pride.

"Whoever may fancy Olive, she'll never marry any but a rich man," she said so often, that I longed to tell her that she was promised to me, and silence her.

At last she found it out for herself, coming upon us in Elm Grove, with my arm about Olive's waist, and her head upon my shoulder.

That evening I saw Nora Shaw stealing slily through the garden gate, in the rear of Miss Noble's house, and fancied I could catch a glimpse of the spinster's black silk gown behind the foliage of the lilac leaves. It boded ill, I thought, and I expected some angry message from Miss Noble, so that I should not meet Olive that evening, as usual.

I was wrong. She met me, and she at least had no knowledge of the visit. Then Nora seemed to grow friendly towards me, and whether I would or no, met me often as I walked from church on Sunday mornings, and kept beside me through the village.

Once I saw Olive looking after us from the little gig in which Miss Noble always drove her niece and herself homewards. That was the day on which Nora, who was, when she was merry, a perfect romp, stole the garnet ring I had worn so long on my little finger, and would not give it back. It was my mother's once; but I could not be rude to the girl; and as she left me at old Shaw's door she said:

"I don't mean to steal it, Grant Ellis. You shall have it back next Sunday."

So I had; but I thought little of rings just then or of aught else, for that morning there had come to me a little note from Olive, and thus it ran:

"When I deceived my aunt, Grant Ellis, I deserved to be deceived myself. I own that, yet none the more honourable in you to do it. Why should you choose me by stealth, while——

"There, I'll not write the words; you know what you have done, and I only write that you may know how I despise you. Oh, if I only could forget that I ever cared for you—that I ever believed you manly and true. It is over now, Grant Ellis, and my only wish is never to be reminded of my folly by seeing you."

I clenched this letter in my hand, and regardless of Miss Noble's wrath, went immediately to her house. I asked for Miss Olive. The servant laughed.

"She left two days ago," she said. "Gone to a boarding-school, I think. Of course you don't want to see Miss Noble."

But I did, and found the lady upright and stern, reading her prayer-book in the breakfast parlour. Before I could utter a word she spoke.

"You have done a very silly thing in coming here, young man," she said. "My niece has confessed all to me, and has been forgiven. She never wishes to see you again, nor do I."

"But what has happened—who has maligned me?" I asked. "I must know, or I cannot defend myself. Believe me, madam, I——"

"Bridget, the door," said Miss Noble. "You will be kind enough never to enter it again, young man." And I followed the servant to the hall, for it was worse than useless to remain.

A week after, Nora Shaw went to live at Miss Noble's, as companion, I believe; but though I strove to draw the truth from her when we met, she would only declare that she had only been to Miss Noble's to carry home some laces she had mended, and that she had said no harm of me. Soon I left Hopburn, and went to a great town to live. There I discovered that the carving and gilding of wood was not, as I thought, my passion; that clay and marble were the things I longed to carve.

I studied hard, as men can only study when all other objects have been torn from them—when Art lives in place of love and home, the warm kiss of the wife, the gentle touch of baby hands, and all the holy things of life.

I became a sculptor, and gained some fame and some gold. The first I valued, but the latter was no joy to me, for whom had I to lavish it upon?—and my simple habits made my daily wants less than those of the poorest labourer I ever knew.

So the gold grew, lying in the iron safe of a great bank, and I worked on. The fair hair withered from my temples, leaving the polished crown bare as an old man's.

One summer time I worked shut up in my close studio, until, fevered and ill, I began to long madly for country air—for the sight of green fields and blue skies; and so I left the town, thinking to pause only when the great lakes were near at hand, and to spend the summer's heated months upon them.

The train sped on. The night was dark, the breeze blew the long trains of sparks back upon the path of the flying engine, as though the stars had fallen earthward. It was a delicious rest to watch them, lying back upon the cushioned seat, with more of a child's content than I had known for years.

At midnight, for I had just looked at my watch, while the passengers were as a general thing asleep—while no one more than I, I verily believe, had any dread of such a calamity—whirling faster than before over the iron track—while the sparks were blown in a longer train of gold, while between them peeped the silver stars from the moonless sky—came a crash, a horrible shiver of the train, as though wood and iron were breathing, sensate things, and had been stricken with a mortal blow. Then I knew nothing beyond starting to my feet, until I found myself amidst shreds of wood and splinters of iron, with one poor wounded wretch beneath me, and another lying on my breast.

I was not injured, strangely enough, but others were, to death. When I regained my scattered senses, I endeavoured to help these sufferers as best I might. We who were unhurt toiled together for hours, and at last all was done that could be. Then, for the place had been growing strangely familiar to me, I turned to one near me.

"What place is this?" I asked.

He answered, "It is called Hopburn, I think."

I knew it before he spoke.

My old, old home. I had never intended to return to it, but I was here, despite of myself. Yonder those dark shadows told me of Elm Grove; beyond them lay the low roof of the dwelling of the old carver and gilder; beyond, Miss Noble's brick house, esteemed so splendid by the envious dwellers of the cottages of the place. Ten years had passed since I turned my back upon them. Were any I knew living and still there? Was she—Olive—under that great star which hung in the dark night sky, as it seemed, just over her old dwelling?

Nay, she was the light of some happy home—she who had wronged me so—had cast me off for some fancied fault without a word of explanation. Yet I loved her. I knew now that I loved her still.

"Is there any way of leaving this place at once?" I asked the man, who had answered my former question.

"There is not another train till morning; but there's a good tavern yonder."

I nodded, and turned away, but not to seek shelter by the Golden Bee.

I went to Elm Grove, and there sat until the dawn broke. I looked for the letters I had carved ten years before.

Deep in bark and moss I found their faint ghosts. None other would have known what they were but myself. Heaven knows why I drew out my knife, and began again touching and re-touching the work of long ago, until it stood bright and clear. O and E linked by a true-love knot, gilded by a slanting beam of the rising sun, that made its way through the foliage to fall upon the spot.

I stood back to look at my work, an artist habit that had grown upon me in my studio, and my shoulder brushed something at once too firm and too yielding to be anything but a human form, and, turning, I saw at my side, looking at my carving, as she had looked so many years before, Olive Olney, or her ghost!

I gave a cry, and we stood face to face.

She spoke first. "Grant Ellis, is it you?"

"I know," I answered. "that it is Olive Olney. Have years stood still for you?"

"They have flown for you," she half-sobbed. "I knew you, carving with your back to me. I should not know you now. How you have altered. Is it time or grief, Grant Ellis?"

My cheek flushed hotly.

She who had broken my heart had no right to speak thus to me. I lifted my hat.

I was turning away with a bow a stranger might have given. She caught my arm.

"Stop," she said, "I have something to say to you. I have longed to say it for five years. The past is dead. Our youth has followed our childhood. I am no more the Olive Olney than you are the same Grant Ellis. As man and woman, we speak to each other. Remember that—remember that I know it. Yet listen. The Olive Olney of that time was not the false thing you must think her. She thought herself much wronged, and so wronged you. She knows the truth now. She has known for a long while."

"Speak!" I said. "I am listening."

The face I looked at was growing pale under the white robe. I could see her heart beat. She paused, seemed to strive to speak, then looking at the sunrise, not at me, said:

"You remember Nora Shaw?"

"Well."

"I had seen her with you," she said. "I had been half jealous of her rustic beauty. I had heard rumours of your liking for her. The day before I wrote that note, I found her with my aunt—by chance it seemed to me. She had brought home laces, and when she spread them out, I saw a ring on her finger you had worn. My aunt saw it too.

"'A pretty ring,' she said.

"The girl blushed.

"'It's my engagement-ring,' she said.

"'And who put it there?' asked my aunt.

"'Grant Ellis,' said she. 'The whole place knows of it, so there's no use in not owning it.'

"'And you're to be married soon?' asked my aunt.

"'In a month," she said.

"And then I felt myself grow faint, and before I could leave the room, had fallen into my aunt's arms.

"In my grief she drew the truth from me, and instead of scolding, comforted me.

"'This is the way all men use the women who are fools enough to love them,' she said. 'Show your pride, girl, while it is hot, and then go away from Hopburn awhile.'

"I obeyed her. No matter how I suffered. It is past.

"When I came home from the school where, at sixteen, it seemed only natural that I should be sent, you were gone from the place, and Nora Shaw was with my aunt. She said you had jilted this girl also. How was I to know it was not the truth. My aunt was growing old. Five years ago, she died. Then Nora Shaw left me. She was to be married to a stranger in the place, and was to leave the neighbourhood.

"I had never liked her, but I had been kind to her. Before she went, she came to me with wet eyes.

"'Miss Olney,' she said, 'I have a confession to make. I'm not entirely to blame, and your aunt is dead. So that you'll take it easier perhaps. I can't go without speaking, for now I'm so happy with the husband I'm to have, I can't help wishing you the same happiness. I wasn't happy then, I was wretched and jealous. I thought I liked Grant Ellis better than all the world, and he didn't care for me. It was hard to bear.'

"I stared at her, half fancying she was mad.

"'I thought you came between us,' she said. 'And, to break it up, I went and told Miss Noble of your meetings. I showed my jealousy, too; and she made use of it. It was all a plot against you, miss. I was never engaged to Grant. I only borrowed the ring of him against his will, for he prized it dearly. And your aunt taught me, word for word, what I said in your hearing. I was glad to see you drop into her arms. I'm sorry to think of it now. I'm better than I was, or happier or something; and, though I know you can't forgive, I won't leave the falsehood behind.'

"She stopped. I couldn't speak. I did not forgive either her or my dead aunt. She looked at me, burst into tears, and, kneeling down, kissed the hem of my dress, and left me. I have never seen her since.

"That is my story, Grant Ellis. For five years I have longed to tell it to you. And it is told now. Good-bye!"

I stepped before her.

"Good-bye, now!" I said.

She faltered—her bosom fluttered—but she never spoke. I took her hand.

"Olive," I said, "it has been an evil thing for me that that falsehood was ever uttered. A great love that never dies, and yet can never be content, wears out the heart it hides in. I have suffered, Olive. You see it in my face?"

She looked at me pityingly, tenderly. I led her back to the old elm-tree.

Newly carven on its bark, the sun gilt those linked letters, O and E, with their twining true-love knot.

"Shall it stand for Olive Ellis?" I asked; and time was blotted out for me, and I was a youth again, when her eyes were hidden on my shoulder and her dark hair brushed my cheek; and, under the old elm, we plighted our troth once more—a troth-plight never to be broken while earth holds us both!

And still, though my sculptor's fame may grow, and though I love to work at my dear art, there are other hopes and joys within my bosom—and higher than any marble Venus or Cupid, beyond any bust of king, prelate, or statesman, I value that simple carving on the elm-tree.

The letters linked by a true-love knot, which gave my Olive to me first and won her back at last—charmed letters that, in these latest years of wedded life, I have not ceased to bless!

M. K. D.

THE INTRODUCTION OF COTTON PAPER.

GREAT was, therefore, the joy of learned men, when the Arabs, to whom the world owes so many arts and valuable branches of knowledge, brought cotton paper to Spain. They had learnt to know it, it is said, in the Bucharyas early as 704, and finding, at the time of their conquest of Spain, water-mills in operation there, they turned them with quick wit and great energy into paper-mills, thus placing soon the new material within the reach of the poorest. It reached with incredible swiftness that high degree of perfection which was needed by the invention of printing some time after, and thus, by the mysterious workings of Providence, the active mind of reformers in state and church found, as it were, the means at hand to make their startling doctrines known at large, and to appeal to the sympathies of whole nations far and near.

The improvement kept pace with the marvellous activity that characterized the middle ages in all directions, and the new paper became one of the most useful weapons of man in the great struggle for freedom that ended in the Reformation. Although the effete Emperors of the East still insisted on writing their edicts on the rare and costly papyrus of antiquity, and the Popes also long preferred it for their Bulls, the rulers of the Occident had long since resorted to parchment, and now condescended to use even cotton. A diploma of Henry IV., Emperor of Germany in 1074, is commonly quoted as the oldest document published on the plebeian substance; and in the thirteenth century it was already universally used in France, Germany, and Italy.

Although liable to losing its whiteness, more easily torn than linen, and hardly equal to the material which the Chinese and Japanese prepare of rice, bamboo, or silk-cocoons, it has held its own to this day, thanks to its cheapness: and England stands almost alone in its proud preference for the more costly linen. For already, long before the Reformation, linen had usurped the place of cotton, and proved its superiority. How it came first into use is not known; perhaps a mere accident let some linen rags become separated from the mass of cotton rags, and produced better paper; perhaps the story of the Arab physician is true, who tells us, in the year 1200, "that the material found in catacombs, and used to enfold the mummies of the Egyptians, was employed either for articles of dress, or sold to writers, who made books for sale out of them,"—a curious proof, if true, that shoddy is not an invention of our day, and that linen-paper was known to Egypt before it came into use in Europe.

In the great library of the Escurial we are told by

Casiri, there is a linen manuscript, dated 1100, containing the aphorisms of Hippocrates; and Mr. John Brooks Yates, of West Dingle, near Liverpool, had a beautiful manuscript of certain homilies of St. Chrysostom on linen-paper, which dates back at least to the thirteenth century.

THE WITCH FINDER.

CHAPTER XVIII.

In the midst of the wild night which had witnessed the preceding events, a woman about forty years of age, of refined and pleasing appearance, with a slight and graceful form, was approaching the Witch Finder's house, proceeding from the centre of the town. Her glances were keen and watchful, her movements enveloped in all the secrecy possible, and her whole aspect that of a fugitive in quest of a hiding-place and in dread of a pursuer.

She was Mistress Peabody, the woman already mentioned in these pages as having been visited in prison by Mrs. Waybrook, and as having escaped.

She had just taken her departure unseen from the gaol, wrapped in the shawl sent her by Hester, and was seeking a place in which to hide from the pursuit which she knew would be made for her.

Reaching the grounds belonging to Boardbush, she ascended the narrow path leading to his house, with many a wary glance around her. Gaining at length the top of the Handle, she sheltered herself against the wind and snow under the fence encircling the dwelling, and assured herself by listening a moment that no alarm had yet been given.

"At last I am free!" she murmured, sinking upon her knees in the snow. "I thank thee, O Heaven, for this mercy." We need not pause to record the prayer of thanksgiving that fell from the lips of the late captive. We will merely say that it was full of gratitude, forgiveness, and patience, a prayer which showed that Mistress Peabody was no ordinary woman, but one as good as she was prepossessing, and the possessor of a soul which had attained to the rarest gifts and graces of religion, virtue and intelligence.

Arising to her feet, the fugitive looked back upon the town, or rather upon its outlines, as revealed by the lights, and especially upon those gleaming from the prison.

"My poor friends and neighbours," she thought with a sigh. "You know not what you have done to me and to others. Victims of a transient frenzy, slaves of your illusions, you have in the same breath my sympathy and forgiveness. Incited by designing or credulous men, you have given arms to your terrors, and made our beautiful town a place of torment—but the hour of your deliverance is near."

The form of Mistress Peabody appeared to increase in size and height, with every breath of air she drew into her lungs, and a perfect calmness was displayed in her every attitude and gesture, as she made a double survey of the scene in the distance and that immediately around her.

"In all the town," she resumed, continuing to look back upon it, "who are the friends to be trusted at such an hour as the present? Only Mrs. Waybrook and Hester, the dear, noble souls, heaven bless them! and they are in such danger, according to the rumours in the prison, of being arrested as witches, that I did not dare to go near them."

She listened and watched again a moment, and then continued:

"Where am I to go to? Where can a fugitive from these hunters of women and children find a shelter, a place of safety? Where but in the house of the arch-tormentor himself!"

The quietness with which this bold project was announced was the quiet heroism of a soul to which fear is a stranger.

"No one will think of looking for me in the lair of the Witch Finder," she added, "and least of all! will he suspect that I am capable of such a step. 'Tis a new idea for a hiding-place," and an illumination, approaching a smile, played over her calm features. "It is making the only use of that man that can be made of him!"

Satisfied with her prospects, she advanced to the gate which rose between her and the house, and measured its height and position with her eyes. This survey was productive of a great deal of satisfaction, and her eyes lighted up with a gleam of resolution.

"It is no such gate as this that can keep me from entering," she declared. "If Boardbush is gone, the way is open to me!"

She stooped in the darkness, and passed her hand over the surface of the snow immediately in front of the gate, when an exclamation of increased satisfaction escaped her.

"He is gone, sure enough," she continued. "Here are his tracks, plainly imprinted in the snow, and pointing in both directions, but those pointing outwards are the newest, having scarcely any snow in them. He has been home this evening, and has just gone away again! I'm just as certain of this as if I had seen him!"

To arrive at these conclusions required nothing more than an ordinary comprehension, for the tracks Boardbush had just made in leaving were scarcely sprinkled with the falling snow, and presented themselves plainly and distinctly in all their outlines to the touch. Those made by him an hour before, at the moment of his return, were almost equally discoverable, as the pressed snow retained its shape under that which had newly fallen, but the loose flakes accumulated in them were sufficient to distinguish the tracks of the one period from those of the other.

Springing high into the air and securing a hold upon the top of the gate—availing herself of the lock and latch as a footing, although a slight one—she reached the top of the obstruction in less time than it takes to record the fact, and leaped boldly into the circular space enclosed between the fence and the dwelling.

"I knew I could do it," said she to herself, panting for breath.

She rested a few moments, till the effects of her desperate scramble over the gate had vanished, and then aroused herself to the task immediately before her—that of gaining admittance to the Witch Finder's dwelling.

The door and windows were out of the question, these apertures being too small or too strongly barred and protected. Mistress Peabody expected to gain the interior by an avenue as unusual as it was practical—by the immense, old-fashioned chimney which occupied the centre of the house.

It was a strange freak of destiny—or rather a remarkable mercy of Providence—that the thoughts of Mistress Peabody had thus been directed to the Witch Finder's house as a place of refuge, at the very moment when that wicked man had concealed Mr. Waybrook therein, and was threatening all sorts of evil to the unsuspicious merchant and his beloved family.

Acting with a promptness as vigorous as it was unusual, the intruder drew a long and knotty pole from the Witch Finder's wood-pile, made a bridge of it between the said pile and the roof, and in less than a minute had placed herself beside the chimney and flung the pole back to its former position, thus covering all traces of her passage.

Peering into the yawning mouth of the chimney, she saw that a fire was burning low on the hearth, presenting itself in the form of a mass of live coals, from which a pleasant heat ascended, almost without any perceptible smoke.

A quiet smile flickered over the features of Mistress Peabody, as she noted the size of the chimney and glanced at her thin and wasted figure. This smile was occasioned by the reflection that her imprisonment had reduced her size too much for her to stick in the passage-way there presented.

Gathering large handfuls of snow from the roof, she flung them down upon the fire, and soon extinguished it sufficiently to allow of her descent without experiencing any inconvenience from it. Again she smiled, and in a way which farther evinced that she still possessed a large stock of cheerfulness, notwithstanding her great misfortunes and sufferings.

"I shall look like a sweep," she muttered, "by the time I get down, but so much the better. It is said that witches frequently fly through the chimney into the houses they visit, and it will be quite in keeping with his doctrines for Boardbush to be visited in this manner!"

All being ready for her descent, she gathered her dress about her, and sprang upon the top of the chimney.

Producing a small ladder of cord, with hooks at one end to take hold of any projecting object, she suspended it in the aperture, and allowed its other end to fall towards the hearth. It was evidently an object she had used in escaping from the prison, for she regarded it with an interest and admiration which indicated a great service of that nature. It was quite as long as was necessary, descending nearly to the top of the fireplace, and hence as long as it could be without being burnt, or without being seen from the kitchen.

This convenient ladder being thus securely placed, Mistress Peabody lost no time in descending to the hearth, and then stepping into the kitchen.

As she had foreseen, she had covered herself and her clothes from head to foot with showers of soot and ashes, in the course of her descent, but she only smiled at this, considering it one of the inevitable evils of her situation. Blackened and besmeared, a picture worthy of the most imaginative painter who ever produced on canvas his ideal of a witch reposing from a nocturnal journey in the air, she seated herself in a crouching position on the hearth, and gave herself up to a momentary enjoyment of the success which had thus far attended her project.

"I must replenish the fire," she mused, as soon as she began to think of a farther movement, "and so dry up this melted snow in the ashes."

This thought was at once acted upon.

"And now to find my hiding-place—a place to sleep in," pursued Mistress Peabody, as she arose and looked about her. "Fortunately the Witch Finder has shut himself up so snugly that a light is not visible from within to any one outside of the house. I can light this candle without fear."

She took a half-consumed candle from the mantelpiece, lighted it, and ascended directly to the little chamber over the kitchen.

The floor of this chamber was composed of loose planks, the walls and roof bare and repulsive, and only a small amount of furniture, and this, consisting of odds and ends, was visible in the apartment in the second and upper story of the building.

"This won't do," was the comment of Mistress Peabody. "There's no place to hide in, and nothing to hide me. It is likely that Boardbush does not come up here once a month—but it will not answer!"

She retired quietly and in silence, descending to the kitchen and thence proceeding to the cellar.

"The colony is full of the mysteries of this house," she thought, "and I'll see what they are. Certain it is that one man can't use all the room there is in it!"

She was surprised at the extent of the cellar, and still more astonished at discovering that beyond it was a little room with stout walls, an ironed and padlocked door, and with all the aspect of a place of confinement. The intruder surveyed it with a strange expression of interest.

"I knew there was some such thing here," she murmured. "Boardbush offered to hide me here, and thus save me from being arrested, if I would pay him properly for the service. I begin to see how he has been making money so fast out of his witchcraft. Ah! here is the place for me!"

She halted at one side of the cellar, with her eyes fixed upon a large pile of boxes and barrels which had been accumulated there in a confused mass.

"Here is a box big enough to live in," she continued. "I can turn its opening to the wall, leave just space enough to creep into it, heap rubbish around it, put some bedding and food into it, and thus prepare myself for a residence of several days in it!"

She spoke in the calm and cheerful spirit we have already noticed, and at once set about the preparation and provisioning of her hiding-place. The instinct and reasoning which had brought her to the Witch Finder's house were soon vindicated by the secret and comfortable retreat she had provided.

"And now to take my ease till his return," thought Mistress Peabody, as she returned to the kitchen and extinguished her candle. "I have marked the way well, and can slip into that box as quietly and silently as a fox can take to his burrow! I shall prove myself too much of a fox this time for Boardbush! He may not enter the cellar once a week on an average. I shall have it all to myself, and then, the house is so small, the floor so open, that I can keep a constant watch upon him! 'Tis a capital idea! Capital!"

Her rejoicings were suddenly checked by the loud and violent creaking of the Witch Finder's bed—by hurried footsteps on the bed-room floor—and by the appearance in the doorway of Mr. Waybrook, who, after extinguishing his light and going to sleep, had been abruptly awakened by the intruder.

"Hallo! who's there?" he demanded, looking out upon Mistress Peabody.

"Board"—faltered the startled and terrified woman, and she fell to the floor insensible.

"Horror, horror!" exclaimed the merchant, after he had walked across the floor, seized a flaming brand and held it near the black and sooty face of the intruder. "What and who is this fearful creature? What is this secret?"

The merchant did not lose his presence of mind at finding himself thus unexpectedly charged, under such strange circumstances, with the task of restoring Mistress Peabody to her senses. To dash some water, from a pail in one corner of the room, into the face of the unconscious woman, was the work of an instant, and the result was the discovery of her whiteness, her age, the thinness and paleness of her features, followed by a complete recognition.

"Why, she's Mistress Peabody!" exclaimed the merchant, as pleased as astonished. "What is she doing here? Why was her face so blackened? Why was she so frightened?"

"Oh, kill me, Mr. Boardbush!" were the first words she uttered, as she sat up on the floor, trying

to rub the wet soot and ashes out of her eyes. "I'd rather die than be taken back to prison!"

The merchant was not a little surprised at this, but he had seen too many astonishing things in the course of his experience to permit his surprise to interfere with his calmness.

"If there be any killing to be done," said he, smiling, "I prefer to leave the work to another."

"What! You are not Mr. Boardbush?"

"No, nor his representative, hardly his guest, but another man altogether."

"You are?"

And the astonished, but relieved woman drew a full breath, changing her position so as to obtain a view of his features.

"As your own eyes will tell you, as soon as you get the soot out of them. I am not unknown in Salem—not forgotten, I hope, by Mistress Peabody."

"Goodness! You know me! Who can you be?"

"Suppose I light a candle, and thus enable you to solve the mystery?"

He interpreted her wondering silence as an assent, and hastened to produce a light, which he held between his features and her own. She looked long and earnestly at the face thus revealed, with a variety of expressions struggling with one another upon her own countenance.

"You look like Mr. Waybrook—Nathan Waybrook—the trader," she finally declared; "and yet how much unlike him!"

"I can say as much of you, Mistress Peabody. You are greatly changed since I sailed for England."

"Oh, it is you, then, Mr. Waybrook? But how came you here, in the den of Boardbush?" she demanded. "I know that something extraordinary has happened, for the change in your appearance shows it. You're as thin as a wafer! I never saw such a change in any human being."

The merchant smiled wearily.

"Again, I can say as much of you," he rejoined, "for you are a mere ghost of the Mistress Peabody I left in Salem seven months since. As to the change in my appearance, it is owing to four days and nights of cold, fatigue, and hunger, in an open boat on the ocean."

"Is it possible? But why not? I, too, have had my sufferings. I have been in a dungeon, and doomed to the gallows."

The couple, so strangely met, looked at each other, at this stage of their confidences, with an extraordinary interest.

Mistress Peabody was the first to continue the conversation.

"I can hardly believe the evidence of my eyes and hearing," she declared. "Have we really met at the house of Boardbush? It seems like a dream!"

"I might say the same, Mistress Peabody. When I sailed from Salem, on this last voyage, you were one of the happiest beings of my acquaintance, living in a little house of your own, as industrious as you were contented, and respected by all who knew you. What blight has fallen upon you? What is the meaning of this talk about dungeons and gallows?"

"I see! I see!" murmured the woman, in a sort of bewilderment, as if overwhelmed with the thoughts pressing upon her. "You have had no news from Salem, poor man, since you left us? You are entirely ignorant of all that has occurred among us during your absence?"

"As ignorant as one dead. Permit me to demand the news of you, Mistress Peabody. How is my wife—my daughter?"

"They are both well, Mr. Waybrook—and as happy as any one can be in our afflicted community. I saw your wife only a few hours since. She visited me in prison!"

"Again you speak in riddles, and again I beg you to tell me what has happened!"

Mistress Peabody arose suddenly, looking around her, uneasily, listening.

"If you have had no news from Salem since you sailed," said she, "rest assured that I shall not attempt to give you any, especially while we are in this house!"

"And why not, pray?"

"Because we have no time for such a long communication. It is better for you to hear the news from the lips of your wife and daughter. Instead of giving you any information, permit me to demand some from you!"

"Proceed!"

"To begin, then—why did you come to this house with Boardbush?"

"Because he brought me here in his arms, having found me insensible. I owe to him my life."

"Well, there's no telling how soon he will take it, and so cancel the debt," said Mistress Peabody, with a shudder. "He means some dreadful wickedness. Don't you know that man better than to trust yourself in his hands?"

"What, Boardbush? I don't know anything about him, except that he seems to be a good-natured and obliging neighbour——"

"I see! I see!" interrupted Mistress Peabody, her uneasiness increasing. "Permit me to ask one question more. Why did Boardbush leave you here alone, and where is he gone?"

"He is gone to bring my wife and daughter. I feel too weary to go home, and he obligingly offered to go and conduct them to me!"

"And you are waiting for them to come!"

"Why, certainly!"

Mistress Peabody was speechless a moment, struggling with a strong internal excitement.

"Poor man!" she at length ejaculated, continuing to move about uneasily. "You are too much in the dark for me to know how to begin to enlighten you!"

"I can see that," declared the merchant, with a thrill of anxiety—for the honest and earnest manner of his companion was already affecting him deeply. "Suppose you take what course you think proper?"

"Will you allow me to think and act a little while for both of us?"

"Certainly. I know not why you came here, nor what you fear from Boardbush, but I can see that a strange cloud is around us. Take what course you will in this darkness."

"You felt too weak to walk home, you said——"

"But my strength, or a fair share of it, has since come to me," interrupted the merchant. "I have had some refreshment, and have had a nap, which has been of wonderful assistance to me!"

"You can walk, then, at this moment, and feel able to go home, with such aid as I can give you?"

"Yes, yes!"

"Then all may be well. You know that the door of this house is locked upon us?"

The merchant bowed.

"And that we shall have to escape through the chimney?"

"No—is it possible?"

"That is the way by which I came here, and the only one by which we can readily take our departure. The windows are small, the walls thick and heavy. We must escape by the chimney!"

Still as weak as a child, and in a maze of astonishment, Mr. Waybrook stared helplessly at his companion, not comprehending how she had descended the chimney safely, or how they could escape by it.

"Do as you will," said he.

"Come, then. We must leave this house instantly, for Boardbush may return at any moment. I have a rope-ladder suspended in the chimney, and we shall have no difficulty in ascending to the roof, for you are as thin as I am, and will have plenty of room. Here is water to extinguish the fire, and there is a wood-pile in the enclosure to help us over the fence. It is pleasant to think of the rage of Boardbush when he returns and finds that you have vanished! A better movement for us all could not have been imagined!"

While speaking these cheering words, Mistress Peabody had extinguished the fire, so as to permit the merchant and herself to reach the chimney, and in a moment their escape from their dangerous quarters was in active progress. A minute later, the couple, so strangely met, had made their way from the Witch Finder's dwelling, and were hurrying towards that of the merchant, hopeful and happy.

CHAPTER XIX.

The terror of the old corporal, at the awful thought of being bewitched, prolonged his fit of hysterics, and even increased its violence, during the few moments he was occupied in going from the judge's house to his own. Bursting into his little kitchen, he commenced bounding to and fro in the apartment, like a famished tiger in a cage.

"Oh, what will become of me?" he exclaimed, wringing his hands. "There's no denying that I'm bewitched dreadfully. I feel it in every joint—a sort of general craziness! an itching to run on all fours! or to do something eccentric! 'He that is bewitched,' says Cotton Mather, 'is troubled with seeing things that have no existence, and likewise fails to see things most in evidence.' My case exactly! I couldn't see hide nor hair of Philip in the place where I'd put him. I've often seen double, that's easy enough—you've only to take a little too much, and there you are—but to see nothing whatever! to see a gigantic cypher where you've just put down a figure one! Oh, I must have taken the disease powerfully!"

He sank into a chair, but instantly started to his feet, too excited to remain motionless a moment.

"I must do something for this dreadful infliction," he resumed, "but what? How cure myself? What shall I take? Pill, powder, or plaster? Let's see—that little book of the deacon's may tell me," and he sprang to his table drawer, in which he commenced rummaging. "Where can I have put it? Ah! here it is!"

He drew forth a little tract of eight pages, which a good-natured neighbour had given him a few days before, and hastened to light a candle in order to read it.

"Yes, here it is," he muttered, glancing at the headings of the document, "the very thing I want, 'Good Tidings to the Afflicted'—'How to cast out Devils'—'Medicaments for those Tormented of Witches'—the very thing! Now, then, for a receipt to cure me!"

He adjusted his spectacles on his nose, and commenced looking for farther instructions.

"I knew it," he exclaimed, pleased and relieved. "Here's a long list of medicines to choose from. 'Take the heart of a cat, the liver of a dog, the comb of a hen, and simmer slowly in a tin kettle, just before midnight, the last day of the month'——Hang me! who can wait so long? I must find a better receipt. 'In extreme cases'—now I have it—'and sudden attacks'—that's me exactly—'seat the patient on a brick heated red hot'—'as soon as it cools sufficiently'—oh, that's a different matter—'and pour cold water down his back'—no, thank ye! not any of that on my pate! I shall die afore I get cured, sure's preaching!"

He dropped his medical tract, the work of some superstitious quack in the community, and looked a picture of despair.

"Afore I get worse," said he, in a hollow voice, "p'raps I'd better write a post-mortem statement. Or shall I resist the dread scourge to the last, and die as becomes a hero of half a century of warfare? I must do something instantly, if at all, that's certain. What if this bewitchment should strike in, become permanent, get bigger and bigger, enlarge, expand, go on increasing? Them as is sick must be medicated, and there's no use of squabbling about the stuff to be taken. The only thing you can do is to take the first dose offered you, and down with it. If it cures you, the doctor has worked a miracle—if it kills, he's merely made a mistake in the nature of your sickness. But what's that? Somebody's coming!"

He listened uneasily to the sound of footsteps which had interrupted him, and which promptly approached the entrance of his cottage.

A knock followed, and the old corporal hastened to open the door. Boardbush stood before him.

"Oh, it is you, Mr. Witch Finder?" exclaimed Trueaxe, resignedly, after his first surprise was over. "All right. Come in. I'm your man!"

Boardbush was evidently astonished at this address, as well as at the excited appearance of the old soldier, but he quietly walked into the house, closing the door behind him.

"Knew you'd be here—or might have known it, if I'd thought a minute," pursued the corporal, giving the visitor a chair.

"Why, what ails you corporal?" demanded Boardbush, taking the seat offered him.

"Don't you see? In a word, I'm bewitched!"

"Bewitched? In what way? How long since? How did it happen?"

"Don't know. But I plead guilty. You're doubtless better informed than I am in regard to the whole matter, or else you would not have come here so soon to arrest me?"

"Arrest you?" echoed Boardbush. "What do you mean by this nonsense? I have not come here to arrest you, but to ask you why you ran away so swiftly from the judge's house?"

"What! You saw me?"

"Yes. I had nearly reached the house, with the intention of calling—on official business, of course—when I saw you bound away like a hunted deer. What was the matter? Perceiving that the judge and Temperance were absent, I thought I'd follow you home, and ask you the meaning of your conduct."

"Well, it all means—witchcraft," answered the corporal. "You see in me, Mr. Boardbush, another victim of this great public calamity. I'm no longer Trueaxe, pure and simple, but a Trueaxe diluted, adulterated; a Trueaxe possessed—a mere shell of the original Trueaxe, with a stuffing of witches, ghosts, and spirits, too numerous to mention, and too many to disentangle; in short, a Trueaxe bewitched!"

"But who has bewitched you?" demanded the Witch Finder, with difficulty preserving his gravity. "There is no effect without a cause. Who is it that thus afflicts you?"

"Who? Don't know, more than the man in the moon. 'Twere useless, as the poets say, to ask me. Mebbe the old deacon's cow, which I thrashed t'other morning, for breaking into my pig-pen."

The Witch Finder was terribly shocked by this gross ignorance.

"Corporal Trueaxe," said he, with considerable severity, "don't you know better than to talk such nonsense? The dumb animals are not capable of bewitching anybody."

"Well, I don't profess to know anything about it. All I know is, that I am bewitched, and that I'm ready to expiate my wickedness at Gallows Hill, since you've come for me ——"

"But how do you know that you are bewitched?" interrupted Boardbush, beginning to feel a professional interest in the case. "Do you feel strangely, quite unlike yourself?"

"Oh, like a cat in a strange garret! You're aware that the human race is afflicted with twenty-two thousand diseases? Well, I feel as if about half of the number were rankling in my body."

"Do you have pains in your head and back?"

"Pains? I'm nothing but a mass of pains, from one end to the other."

"Do you ache in every bone? Are you sore all over?"

"Yes, and a great deal more."

"Let me see your tongue."

The corporal exhibited that useful member, and the Witch Finder shook his head.

"You have the symptoms," said he; "and I think a spell has been put upon you. Some enemy has done this. Who is it?"

"Haven't the slightest idea. Don't know that I've an enemy in the world, unless it's that old woman that lives at the judge's."

"Ah! She's the sort of woman for the business," commented Boardbush, thoughtfully. "What cause of hatred can she have against you?"

"Well, she used to purr around me when I worked in the judge's garden, and wanted me to marry her. I thought I would, as soon as a law was passed to hang all bachelors, but not a minute sooner."

"And she was offended?"

"Yes, she pouted a little."

"In what way?"

"Why, she said I was a natural-born idiot!"

The Witch Finder smiled.

"I dare say she's at the root of your troubles," he observed. "You will do well to have an eye upon her, at the same time that you guard yourself against her. Thus far you do not seem to be very badly afflicted, but you'll probably be all right by to-morrow. I will ask you a little farther about the symptoms. Can you use your limbs freely?"

"Well, I did a few minutes since, coming home from the judge's."

"True, and that reminds me to ask you again the cause of your hurry."

"It was there that I was taken," explained the corporal, "and I naturally wished to leave the premises as quickly as possible."

"But in what way were you taken?"

"Just as Cotton Mather says we are—with a 'troubled vision.' I couldn't see Philip; he'd vanished!"

"Philip? Captain Ross you mean!" exclaimed the Witch Finder, with a deep and sinister joy. "He was saved, then, by Miss Stoughton?"

"Exactly; and she called me in to put him to bed, which I did."

This was the information Boardbush wanted; that for which he had gone to the judge's, after agreeing with Mr. Waybrook to go for his wife and daughter.

"What took place next?" he demanded, concealing the interest he felt in the conversation.

"Why, I met Miss Hester and Philip's bear on the beach, and told 'em—for the bear smelt it out—that Philip was at Temperance's, safe and sound, and——"

"What! You told Miss Waybrook of her lover's return?" interrupted the Witch Finder starting to his feet, in great excitement.

"Yes, I told her, for the bear threatened to devour me alive if I didn't!"

"The girl knows, then, that her lover is here," muttered Boardbush to himself. "This is a bad business. The game is not lost, however. I sunk the boat, and to-morrow night I will destroy it, so that Ross cannot show how he arrived; and here is all the chance in the world for a charge of witchcraft to be effective. There are hundreds of people in Salem who expected friends in the Harbinger, and who will be anxious to know why the captain is skulking around here, when those expected friends are lost or in danger. He must be called to account!"

"I didn't hear what you said," observed Trueaxe, who had been thinking of watching the conduct of the old woman, as the Witch Finder had suggested.

"No matter—I was merely thinking. What did you do next?"

"Why, Miss Hester sent me back to the judge's to tell Philip where she was, and take him to her. It was then and there that my vision became troubled. Philip had gone——"

"And Temperance with him?"

"Well, yes," replied Trueaxe, a little startled by the blunt question, "she had also vanished."

"And you thought there was witchcraft in their disappearance?" sneered Boardbush. "Now, just see what it is to get excited, and allow your fancies to run away with you. If you had thought a minute you would have seen that Temperance was obliged to remove the captain elsewhere, if she wanted to enjoy her peace of mind while nursing him, for the judge——"

"To be sure, I see all that now," interrupted the corporal, smiling as complacently as if he had been cured of his late affliction. "Why didn't I think of that? But I know why I didn't. I'd just encountered an old witch and got excited. Your idea, then, is that Miss Temperance took Philip away—but where?"

"Where would she be the most likely to seek quarters for Philip, and to whom would she be the most likely to take him, supposing that he wanted nursing? There is only one answer to these questions. Miss Stoughton has taken Philip to the little house of her servant."

We have already had occasion to notice the clearness with which Boardbush reasoned, and need not dwell upon the present example of it.

"You've hit it," exclaimed Trueaxe, with a perfect conviction of the truth of his companion's reasoning. "But, see here, under this view of the case, I was not bewitched at all—no more than you are at this moment."

"Not a bit more," answered Boardbush. "Your fears have all proceeded from a disturbed imagination, and I hope the lesson will not be lost upon you."

"Thanks for your good wishes, and also for the information I have received from you. Shall you go and see where Philip is?"

"I? Why should I? What is he to me? No, I am going home immediately, to bed and to sleep, and so, corporal, good night to you!"

He took his departure, and Trueaxe resumed his seat before the fire to muse upon what he had heard.

"Philip must have fainted again," thought he, "and Temperance may have some design upon him, as I suspected. Wonder if she really took him to the house of her servant? Wonder if the judge has come home, and if anything's going on there? Wonder if Miss Hester is waiting patiently for me to bring Philip to her? And wonder If I ain't an old fool to sit here wondering, when a few minutes' walk would settle the whole question?"

He arose, wrapped himself up warmly, and again left the cottage.

(To be continued.)

HOUSE-HUNTING.

"I AM completely discouraged," said Mrs. Trent.

"That's a state of affairs that happens pretty often, isn't it?" said Mr. Trent, good-humouredly, as he folded his newspaper to get at the editorial side, and dropped an extra lump of sugar into his coffee. "What's the trouble, now?"

"Why, it's this house-hunting business," said his wife, in a despairing tone. "Three days I have raced about the city trying to find a place that will suit us, and here I am, just as far removed from success as ever."

"Rome wasn't built in a day," said Mr. Trent, evidently intending the truism to be consolatory.

"Rome is none of my business," said his wife, sharply. "House-hunting is — and I'm pretty much determined to give it up, and stay where we are."

"Quite out of the question," said Mr. Trent, shaking his head, "with the rent raised twenty pounds a year."

"Well, what am I to do? I have looked at every house with a bill on it—I have worried the house-agents nearly out of their senses—I have walked the soles off two good pairs of boots, and ——"

"But, my dear, you are really exaggerating matters. Just look at the common-sense of the thing," said Mr. Trent, flourishing his left hand, oratorically. "Here we are, wanting a commodious house—here are the columns of this daily paper teeming—yes, absolutely teeming, my love—with the details of commodious houses that are to let! Could there be a neater system of supply and demand, I ask you?"

"I don't know anything about supply and demand—I only know that I can't find a house to suit me!"

"Then, my dear—excuse me—but you must really be somewhat hypercritical. It's the easiest thing in the world!"

"One thing I am quite certain of," said Mrs. Trent, setting her lips resolutely together. "I shall make no more endeavours. Bridget gave me warning this morning—and Tommy has broken out with the measles, poor, dear little fellow. So you will have to go house-hunting!"

"I!"

"Why, yes," said Mrs. Trent, with a gleam of malice in her eyes. "'It's the easiest thing in the world, you know!'"

"But I haven't time, my dear."

"Oh, it needn't take you any time at all—'just look at the common-sense of the thing!'"

"*Argumentum ad hominem*, is very poor logic, Sarah," said Mr. Trent loftily; his wife smiled.

"Here is my list of houses for to-day—suppose you take it, and see what you can do," she said. "I am discouraged, as I told you before."

Mr. Trent took the list, unwillingly enough.

"I ought not to steal the time from my business, that's a fact, but I suppose I shall have to. At all events, I shall spend as little time about it as possible. Women are perpetually doubting, considering and wondering if they can't do better. I shall decide the matter at once."

"And I shall be very glad to have it decided," said his wife. Mr. Trent thought there was an accent of satire in her voice, but he judged best to take no notice of it.

Thus, armed with a list of "highly eligible residences," Mr. Joseph Trent went forth, conquering and to conquer!

It was a bright June morning, with hazy glimpses of blue sky, and sudden bits of sweeping shadow—just such a morning as makes one reflect on the infinite superiority of little nooks, and cottages on the line of a railroad, somewhere. But Mr. Trent was deceived by no such visionary temptations—he went straight ahead, according to his list, neither looking to the right nor to the left.

"No. — —— street; here we are," he said to himself. "A desirable house, no doubt—if there wasn't a stable on one side and a distillery on the other. I don't think agents should be allowed to represent things so glaringly!"

And Mr. Trent passed on, with his nose in the air.

"16, Rosemay Place—a nice-looking little house. I think Sarah would like this."

Mr. Trent rang the bell, and looked benevolently down on the lady who answered it—a slip-shod matron, with faded hair, twisted up very tight behind, and a shawl hurriedly assumed to hide matutinal *déshabille*.

"Can I see this house, madam?"

"It's early," said the lady, "but I suppose you can."

She led the way, listlessly.

"The bath-room pipes leak, eh?" said our hero, eyeing a discoloured spot, as if the parlour ceiling had a violent attack of erysipelas.

"Yes, they do leak!"

"And—it seems—there's a dampness in the air. Cellar's deficient, eh?"

"The collars are damp."

"The paper-hangings are very bad—the paint is fairly brown."

"Yes, the house is out of order."

"Will the landlord make repairs?"

"Don't know."

"What is the rent of this house?"

"I really can't say."

"How long has it been built?"

"I have no idea."

"I wonder if the woman knows anything at all," said Mr. Trent to himself, as he indignantly took his departure. "I wouldn't live in that nasty little hole if I were to be paid for it."

"No. 7, —— street," came next upon the list. Not discouraged, Mr. Trent boldly applied.

"Can I see this house?"

"No, you can't," returned an Irish maiden.

"Why not?"

"'Cause t'aint hours."

"Yes, but——"

"There's no use talking," said the girl, gradually decreasing the size of the crack in the door, through which she gave him audience. "Missis says, she won't show the house until after twelve o'clock." And she shut the door emphatically.

The next house was large, airy, and pleasant. Mr. Trent liked its appearance.

"What is the rent?" he asked, of a fat, drawling old lady, in silver spectacles, who had escorted him round the premises.

"Well," said this matron, "rents ain't as they used to be. When I was first married—that was in 18—, the year of the great cholera, you know. Deary me! what a panic that was! and I never saw that charcoal and sulphur three times a day did any good, though, to be sure, the allopathic physicians——"

"Yes, madam, I know. But when could you give possession?"

"Well, as to that, my nephew Isaac—he is in the drysalting—maybe you've heard of the firm, Denny and Dickerman—they've been established twelve years in one place; and though I say it as shouldn't say it——"

"Exactly so; but you did not mention the rent."

"Didn't I? Well, now, it beats all! How forgetful I'm getting. It was only yesterday I went down the cellar to open the windows—cellars must be aired, you know, sir—and my poor dear husband—he died ten years ago, come the first of August, and the doctors never could fairly tell what ailed him, for——"

"Madam, really," interposed Mr. Trent, "my time is limited, and——"

"Yes, yes, I was just agoin' to tell you," resumed the complacent old lady; "but you don't give me a chance to get a word in edgeways. The house ain't to let!"

"Not to let?"

"No. I'm just goin' to send Mary out to take down the bill. We've concluded to stay here."

"But, madam, why couldn't you have said so at first?"

"Well, I hate to be disobligin', and you seemed to want to see the house."

Mr. Trent stifled a very unamiable expletive between his teeth, turned on his heel, and rushed down stairs with an energy that made the old lady tremble for her new stair-carpeting.

The next house was well located, commodious, and in fine repair. Mr. Trent liked the looks of it. In imagination he already saw himself and Sarah dispensing its hospitalities to admiring friends.

"What is the rent?" he asked, eagerly.

"Four hundred a year!"

Mr. Trent retreated so rapidly that he fell over the poodle dog, and seriously endangered the calves of his legs!

"Perfectly exorbitant," he muttered, as he sallied into the open street, and once more consulted his list.

House after house was examined and rejected—when one circumstance met his views another didn't—when price was right location was wrong—and Mr. Trent's bones waxed weary and his tired feet began to blister, as the sun descended lower and lower in the heavens.

"I'll try the last place," said our friend, dejectedly, "and then—I'll see house-hunting in Jericho before I do any more of it!"

(He would probably have arrived at this conclusion some time ago, had it not been for a sneaking recollection of that expression in his wife's face, as she bade him good-bye that morning.)

The servant "didn't know about the house—she'd call missus;" and "missus" accordingly made her appearance; a withered little lady, like a limp bundle of faded straw, with rouged cheeks, and a profusion of short pipe-stemmy curls, which quivered paralytically at every motion of her head.

"Why, it's Joseph Trent!" cried this female, clasping her hands spasmodically; and Mr. Trent, to his dismay, rather than gratification, recognized the damsel to whom he had addressed his first copy of verses, and sent his earliest valentine—Miss Rhodanthe Day!

She extended both her hands engagingly—and Trent could not but take them, however ungraciously.

"So sweet to renew the ties of earlier days," she murmured, softly.

"Of course—exactly," stammered our hero, wondering how he could ever have seen anything to admire in those glassy blue eyes and pinched features. "I understand this house is to let."

Miss Day came down to sublunar considerations, at this; it was to let, and was her own property.

"The remnant of poor papa's once extensive possessions," she sighed. "Ah, how we all change!"

She had changed, at all events! at least so thought Mr. Trent.

It was a handsome house, well arranged, and Mr. Trent approved of its appearance.

"What is the rent?" he asked.

"Still the same straightforward creature as ever!" laughed Miss Rhodanthe, venturing, although in maiden shyness, to tap him archly on the arm. "And yet how natural in us all to sigh for the sweet ties of home! The rent, to you, would be—dear me, how embarrassing to be obliged thus to mingle the tide of one's holier emotions with the common-place dross of business relations——"

"Ahem—yes—the rent would be——"

"Perhaps I had better state first," fluttered Miss Rhodanthe, with downcast looks, "that—you know it is Leap Year, Joseph; and I trust you will not deem it unmaidenly that I speak with more openness than I should otherwise venture to use——"

"Certainly not," said our puzzled hero; "but about the rent——"

"Yes. I was about to remark that I had never ceased to regret the coldness with which I repulsed your—your attentions in days long since gone by, and—if it is not yet too late—the rent to you would be merely nominal, and——"

"Yes," interrupted Mr. Trent, beginning to feel a little nervous, "I think you would find us good tenants. Our family is small, and my wife——"

Miss Rhodanthe recoiled as if she had been shot.

"Your wife! Then you are married?"

"Certainly, I am married."

"That alters matters entirely." Miss Rhodanthe was evidently struggling with some hysterical affection. "I don't let my house to miscellaneous trash, sir! I'm surprised at your audacity in venturing to ask it! A family of children and a wife tearing my house to pieces! No, sir—certainly not! You will find the door at the foot of yonder flight of stairs, sir!"

And Miss Rhodanthe courtesied until the curls quivered like a grove of trees in a tempest. Mr. Trent, confounded and almost alarmed, retreated without loss of time; there was that in the spasmodic motion of Miss Day's fair finger-nails that boded mischief. And, not until he crossed the threshold of his own door, did he feel quite safe.

"Well, my dear, what luck?" demanded Mrs. Trent. "Of course you've taken a house?"

"N-not exactly, my dear," said Joseph, feigning a lazy indifference. "The fact is—that is, it really appears to me, we can't do better than retain this house; the position isn't so very bad, and——"

"The landlord has been here this morning, and says he shall raise the rent twenty pounds a year!"

"No matter. I'll take it for another year! My dear," said Mr. Trent, piteously, "I'd live under an umbrella sooner than spend another day in house-hunting!"

"Didn't I tell you so?" retorted his wife.

"Let's have dinner, my dear," said Mr. Trent.

And he hunted houses no more! A. R.

FACETIÆ.

WHAT is the difference between charity and a tailor?—the first covers a multitude of sins; the second, a multitude of sinners.

"HAVE I not a right to be saucy if I please?" asked a young lady of an old bachelor.—"Yes, if you *please*, but not if you *displease*."

THE Paris fashion for ladies is to carry their parasols attached to their sides like a sword. *Voici le sabre, le sabre de ma belle.*

"WATER ON THE BRAIN."

Mrs. Fisher: "We can have fresh fish and oysters all the year round! I have been reading all about it; so, have ordered a large aquarium to be made for the bath-room. How nice it will be during Lent—not to go to market!"

THE latest invention is said to be ink made from India-rubber. It has been suggested that writers inclined to "stretch a story," will make use of the article.

AN old author quaintly remarks: "Avoid argument with the ladies. In spinning yarns among silks and satins, a man is sure to be worsted and twisted; he may consider himself wound up."

A GENTLEMAN gave as a toast at a dinner, "The ladies—divide our sorrows, double our joys, and treble our expenses," when a lady gave, "The gentlemen—divide our time, double our cares, and treble our troubles."

A PRETTY girl forcibly and truthfully says: "If our Maker thought it wrong for Adam to be single, when there was not a woman upon earth, how criminally guilty are the old bachelors, with the world full of pretty girls!"

TAKING THE CENSUS.

Old Lady: "Laws-a-massy! he writes like a schoolmaster! Some folks do say as how, if you hain't got no eddication, you hain't got no sense. I don't see how you kin take our senses—when we hain't got any, 'cause we hain't any of us got no eddication!"

"THREE AND SIXPENCE PER GAL!" exclaimed Mrs. Partington, looking over the "Price Current." "Why, bless me, what is the world coming to when the gals are valued at only three and sixpence a piece?"

A YOUNGSTER who was taken to a toy bazaar the other day by his doting mamma, was shown a number of articles by the attentive salesman, who was in the hope of enlisting his attention and effecting a sale, but without effect. At last a papier-mache model of a mouse was produced, and, after being wound up with a key, was set down upon the floor, where it ran about in the most mouse-like manner imaginable. The youngster's attention was enlisted at once; but the result was not as his mother or the salesman expected, for he shouted out, "Oh, mamma, I don't want that; we've got lots of them at home, and don't have to wind 'em up either."

"I WISH I knew how I could make neighbour Ransom keep the Sabbath," said the good old Rev. Dr. Radgers. "*Lend* it to him, pa," said the D. D.'s hopeful son; "he never borrowed anything yet which he didn't keep."

RECIPE FOR MAKING LOVE.—Take two parts sugar, three of soft soap, a little sago, plenty of summer savory; add a little wine, mix well together, and leave the whole to "set" for two or three nights. It is best taken while hot.

NO PIPES ALLOWED.

Young Wife: "Oh! goodness me! you certainly don't mean to drive me insane, by smoking a pipe? I told you I objected to cigarettes! but a pipe——"

Husband: "You'll soon get used to it, my love. You will only have it evenings and Sundays."

MR. SNUB perceiving that the milk he was pouring into his coffee cup was none of the richest, said to his hostess: "Haven't you any milk that is more cheerful than this?" "What do you mean by that?" "Why, this milk seems overpowered by the blues."

"I REMEMBER," says Lord Bidden, "Mr. Justice Gold trying a case at York, and when he had proceeded for about two hours, he observed: 'Here are only eleven jurymen in the box, where is the twelfth?' 'Please you, my lord,' said one of the eleven, 'he has gone away about some other business, but he left his verdict with me.'"

DEAN JACKSON, passing one morning through Christ-Church quadrangle, met some under-graduates who walked along without capping. The Dean called one of them and asked, "do you know who I am?" "No, sir." "How long have you been in college?" "Eight days, sir." "Oh, very well," said the Dean, walking away, "puppies don't open their eyes till the ninth day."

"GIFTS OF CONDOLENCE!"

Husband: "I think that quite enough to give for a Wedding Present. A girl ought to be satisfied with getting a husband, and not expect to tax her friends for presents!"

Wife: "On the contrary her friends can't be too generous—in consideration of the disappointments and vexations to which she has to submit! They ought to call them 'Gifts of Condolence!'"

AN Irishman took off his coat to show a terrible wound which he had received a few years before. Not being able, however, to find the wound, he suddenly remembered it was on his "brother Bill's arm."

CURIOSITIES WANTED.—A bunch of blossom from a railway plant; the topmost bough of an axle-tree; a crust from the roll of the ocean; a feather from the crest of a wave; some quills from the wings of the wind; a lock of hair from the head of a column; a hoop from the pale of society; the knife used by ringers when pealing bells; a broom for sweeping assertions; a collar for a neck of land; a quizzing glass for an eye to business; a rocker from the cradle of the deep; a few tears from a weeping willow; and some down from the bosom of a lake.

SEEING THE POINT.

Flora:—"Mamma, I should like to stay at home to-day—it's going to rain, too—look where the wind is; it's in the south, you can see by the letters on the church spire, and——"

Mamma:—"Pooh, nonsense, child! Be off to school at once; that S is always pointing in that direction."—*Fun.*

ALL FOURS.—The French Emperor has presented a pair of magnificent fowling-pieces to the celebrated baritone of the Opera. Of course they are double-barrelled, or they would hardly do for Faure.—*Fun.*

DOING AT ROME AS ROME DOES.

A leader in the "leading journal" describing the entry of the Prince of Wales into Dublin, states—

"The most striking feature in the procession was, however a *void*."

This is certainly an eminently Irish way of putting it. *Fun.*

FIDDLE-DE-DEE.—The *Globe* correspondent speaks of a French lady who appeared at the Grand Opera covered with jewels. She had just paid twenty-four thousand pounds for a set of diamonds, yet had previously the reputation of possessing more precious stones than many a Princess. Her husband is an

ex-chef-d'orchestre! He of course pays the piper—but how some one must have paid the fiddler!—*Fun.*

MAY BE HEARD EVERYWHERE.—"Songs without Words"—a remarkable performance; but perhaps a still more wonderful feat is playing upon words.—*Punch.*

THANKS TO KING THEODORE.—Twopence more of Income-Tax! It is enough to make one savage. As one *might* say, but for fear of saying something vulgar, "Twopence more of Income-Tax, and Up goes the Monkey!"—*Punch.*

A KICK AT THE CANCAN.

ENGLAND boasts its hornpipe, Scotland its reel, and Ireland its jig. But what, except the cancan, is the Frenchman's national dance? We ask, because we notice that a writer in a Paris newspaper is savagely indignant on this tender point:—

"Enfin, Mlle. Finette, une brune que l'on connait, est engagée dans un bastringue de Londres pour y danser la 'danse nationale' des Français—dit l'affiche—le cancan. Pourquoi pas? *'Partant pour la Syrie,'* n'est-il pas pour le moment notre air national?'

Anglicé, et aliter, fucit indignatio versum:—

"The cancan; mon Dieu! 'tis an insult to France,
To call that vile orgy her national dance.
Perfidious England as well may declare
'*Champagne Charley*' is known as her national air!"
—*Punch.*

AN ANSWER REQUESTED.—Pinksytt, who is better acquainted with painting than politics, would be glad to know to what the writer of an address in the papers signed "John Walsh"—an artist he never heard of before—refers, when he speaks of "the incidents of my first canvass." P. says he remembers too well the incidents of his.—*Punch.*

WHAT SAYS SIR BERNARD BURKE?—In the Installation Procession in St. Patrick's, there was a "gentleman at large." "Who could this be?" the curious ask. Some one who was released from incarceration for that day only, on his promising to return at nightfall? But Irish gentlemen have been far too wise to bring themselves into this predicament. It therefore remains a mystery who the "gentleman at large" was, and how he got his ticket-of-leave—a thousand pardons, admission—to the Cathedral.—*Punch.*

THE PLEASURES OF SHOPPING.

DEAR PUNCH,

I am one of the old school, and like the old ways. Judge then, my old friend, of the shock to my equanimity the other day. I required six pennyworth of coat buttons, and went into the first shop which looked like one for the sale of that article. On entering, I walked up to the counter and said to the man, "I want some buttons."

"Oh, sir!" said he, "please go to the other side, to the 'Button Department,' this is Baby Linen."

I went to the other side, and "I want some buttons," said I.

"What do you want them for?"

"For my coat."

"Oh then, sir, if you please to the next shop, this is the 'Ladies' Button Department."

I was accordingly ushered by a perfumed ladies' button department gentleman, through several gilded corridors, then up one pair of stairs, and down another, and finally found myself roaming at large in the gentlemen's department general. I went up to the first counter, and repeated my request.

"Oh, sir, if you please," said the attendant, "the other side; this is the 'Gentlemen's Flannel Department.'"

It is needless to describe the thing any farther. Suffice it to say that, after applying at the Gentlemen's Hosiery Department, running a tilt at the Gentlemen's Pantaloon Department, and being nearly stranded on the Gentlemen's Fancy Shirt Department, I got what I wanted, sixpennyworth of buttons.—Ever yours, dear *Punch*,

—*Punch.* JOHN STRONG.

WHAT'S IN A NAME?—Some of our literary friends tell us, and they have the best means of knowning,—bread and butter, not to mention beer.—*Tomahawk.*

So fearful has been the financial crisis, and so crowded the Court of Bankruptcy, that even the Queen's statue in the Royal Exchange has been whitewashed.—*Tomahawk.*

THE DOCKYARDS.—There is now no doubt about the closing of the minor shipbuilding yards, an order having been received for Deptford to shut up in the course of the year. Woolwich will, in all probability, follow Deptford.

ELECTRICAL JEWELS.—One of the latest Parisian novelties is a scarf pin for gentlemen's wear in which a curious application of electricity is introduced. The pins are finished with imitation human heads, the eyes of which are made to open or shut at the will of the owner. The electro-motor is a simple voltaic element of zinc and carbon, or zinc and platinum, the whole being enclosed in a small brass case conveniently carried in the vest pocket. The carbon is fixed in a vessel partly filled with a solution of sulphate of mercury, and the zinc is attached to the lid of the case. No electrical action is generated as long as the case is carried perpendicularly, but if laid on its side a current is formed.

LE JARDIN MABILE.

SHOULD you e'er go to France—as, of course, you intend—
(Though the Great Exposition is now at an end)
And in Paris should stroll—as I'm certain you will—
In the Gardens adorned with such wonderful skill,
To call them "Elysian," is scarcely to reach
What the grammars entitle a "figure of speech"—
Don't fail, ere you go, for a moment to steal
A look at the spot called the *Jardin Mabile.*

'Tis a place of enchantment!—a rural retreat,
Where Nature and Art in such harmony meet
To form an *Elysium* of music and flowers,
Of moss-covered grottoes and fairy-like bowers,
Where lamps blaze in tulips, and glow-worms of gas
Illumine the roses and gleam in the grass—
That, merely to see it, one cannot but feel,
If there's heaven on earth, 'tis the *Jardin Mabile!*

But wait until midnight, or, say, one o'clock,
When hither by hundreds the citizens flock
And strangers unnumbered are strolling around
In the serpentine walks of the beautiful ground;
Just wait, if you please, till the dance is begun,
And then, at the height of the frolic and fun,
Pray look where the bacchanals caper and reel,
And say what you think of the *Jardin Mabile?*

The music—the maddest that ever you heard—
Strikes up from the stand, and away, at the word,
The dancers revolve—'tis the *Waltz*, that is all—
The same you have witnessed at many a ball;
There's nothing extremely surprising in this;
The motion is swift, but there's little amiss;
You merely remark, "There is plenty of zeal
In the dancers who dance in the *Jardin Mabile?*"

But see!—where the people are closing about
Two brazen-browed women, and hark to the shout,
"*La Can-can!* they're at it!" No wonder you stare!
One foot on the pavement—now two in the air!
A Cockney, intent on this rarest of shows,
Retreats from the shoe that is grazing his nose;
Good lack! till he dies, he'll remember the heel
That spoiled his new hat in the *Jardin Mabile!*

There's drinking and gaming at many a stand;
There's feasting and flirting on every hand;
The Paphian queen—it were easy to tell—
Is the Abbess, to-night, of yon auchorite cell;
And the marvelling *Turk* (for the Sultan is here!)
Cries, "*Allah, mashallah!* these Christians are queer!
Such orgies as these very plainly reveal
Why they *don't* bring their *wives* to the *Jardin Mabile!*"

"A pity!" you sigh, and a pity it is
Such revels should shame such a garden as this;
Where all that is charming in Nature and Art
Serves only to sully and harden the heart;
"The Devil's own hot-house!" you musingly say,
While turning in sadness and pity away,
Reflecting that *Sin*—as you cannot but feel—
Is the thriftiest plant in the *Jardin Mabile!*

J. G. S.

GEMS.

WE should not only be sorry for the evil we have done, but for the good we have left undone.

MEN often speak of their misfortunes, but they do not like to be considered by others unfortunate.

SELFISHNESS is that detestable vice which no one will forgive in others, and no one is without in himself.

PEOPLE of much pretence and little merit are oftener seen than those of much merit and little pretence. The reason is, that it is easier to pretend than to be.

WILLIAM PENN'S famous saying should be written upon the church's banners: "No pain no palm; no thorn, no throne; no gall, no glory; no cross, no crown."

TEA IN JAPAN.—Tea is a simple infusion of the leaves in *boiling* water, not a decoction, as with us. The water is poured on, and the delicate flavour is drank off while it remains delicate and delicious. Thus the nerves of the Japanese are spared what ours suffer. No steeped tea is tolerated in the tea-countries.

HOUSEHOLD TREASURES.

PRESERVING EGGS.—Take about ten pounds of unslacked lime and eight pounds of common salt and dissolve or mix them with twenty gallons of water. In this solution place the fresh eggs to be preserved, and let them remain from ten to twenty days. Then dissolve, in a small quantity of water, the following substances, viz., one quarter pound of chloride of calcium; one half pound of liquid phosphoric acid; one pound chloride of lime (or bleaching powder); one half pound of nitrate of potash. This solution I add to the former containing the eggs. In this preparation the eggs should remain for about thirty days before they are taken out or ready for market. The chloride of calcium prevents the eggs from drying up, and any other deliquescent salt may be substituted for it, but in preference the chloride of calcium. Nitrate of soda, or other soluble nitrate, may be used instead of nitrate of potash, and any equivalent chloride compound may be used instead of the bleaching powder.

FURNITURE POLISH.—"Half a pint of cold-drawn linseed oil, half a pint of vinegar, 2 oz. spirits of wine, 2 oz. red lavender, 1 oz. spirit of salt, and a penny worth of white resin." A furniture oil for taking out the marks left by hot dishes, the stains of wet glasses, &c., may be made in the following manner: shellac varnish, 4 oz.; alkanet root, 1 oz.; linseed oil, 16 oz.; spirits of turpentine, 2 oz.; wax, 2 oz. Mix these all well together, and let them stand for a week." Either of these should be applied with a piece of flannel, and then rubbed briskly with a soft cloth. If the desired effect is not produced by the first application, it must be repeated day after day until a satisfactory result is obtained. As you may also like to know how to make what is called "French cream" for polishing all kinds of furniture, I add the recipe: "¼ oz. of white wax, 1 oz of beeswax, ½ oz. of Castile soap, one gill of turpentine, and one of water. Dissolve the wax in the turpentine, and the soap in boiling water. When it is all dissolved, mix it together, and shake it up in a bottle. Apply a little of this cream with a flannel, rub well into the furniture, and polish with a clean duster."

MISCELLANEOUS.

MR. ANTHONY TROLLOPE has sailed for the United States, where he is empowered to arrange the terms of a new postal treaty.

CHICAGO is a wonderful place. Babies are no longer born there, if we can credit the announcement in a local paper, that "during February 229 young gentlemen and 321 young ladies were born in this city."

THE bronze statue of the late Sir Robert Peel, which stood for some time uncovered at the central entrance to New Palace Yard, having been removed on account of the ineligibility of the site, will be shortly placed on a granite pedestal at the entrance to New Palace Yard fronting Parliament Street and Great George Street.

SNOW DRIFTS ON RAILWAYS.—In Southern France the railways are seriously embarrassed every winter by snow drifts filling the deep cuttings, but the past season a section of the line of railway from St. Etienne to Annoway has been kept open by the judicious planting along the banks on either side of the track of pine trees, a system of treatment previously adopted in arresting the *dunes*, or inroads of sea sands, which in many parts of France used to annually cause great damage.

IN order to give some idea of the abundance of the eggs of the sturgeon, it is stated that the weight of two ovaries equalled nearly a third of the weight of the whole animal; in other words, these ovaries weighed nearly eight hundred pounds in a female whose weight was two thousand and eight hundred pounds. It is with these eggs chiefly, but not altogether, that caviare is prepared, and the article is more or less relished according to the state of the eggs.

THE FRENCH POST OFFICE.—The French railway companies are under the Governmental concession bound, 1. To run gratuitously every day upon each line and each way a train, the hours and progression of which are regulated by the Post Office, which can make up that train as it thinks proper, without any limitation of weight. 2. To carry gratuitously by every one of the ordinary trains a Post Office van. 3. To effect at a reduced rate the daily supplementary services which the Post Office may apply for.

CONTENTS.

	Page		Page
Ellen Lambert's Twenty Years	97	Electrical Jewels ...	119
Science	100	Le Jardin Mabile ...	119
Curiosities of Sound...	100	Gems...	119
Artificial Ivory... ...	100	Household Treasures	119
Michelde'ver...	101	Snow Drifts on Railways	119
Cordelia's Fortune ...	103	The French Post Office	119
Gentle Leonie	106	Miscellaneous	119
Honeychurch Rookery	109		
Mabel Wayte	111		*No.*
Arithmetical Prophecy	112	The Witch Finder, *commenced in*	256
Statistics	112	Michelde'ver, *commenced in*	259
The Letters on the Elm	113	Honeychurch Rookery, *commenced in*	259
The Introduction of Cotton Paper	114	Ellen Lambert's Twenty Years, *commenced in*...	260
The Witch Finder ...	115	Gentle Leonie, *commenced in*	266
House-Hunting	117		
Facetiæ	118		
The Dockyards	119		

NOTICES TO CORRESPONDENTS.

D. W. B.—Any groom or stable boy will instruct you for a shilling.

S. W. M.—Being "bound" for seven years, your term of service expires at the end of that time.

F. H.—We do not remember. Write to the Editor either of the "Era," or "Sunday Times."

A Constant Reader.—We make no charge for insertions in these columns.

One of our First Readers.—Messrs. Spode and Copeland, whose Staffordshire address you may obtain at their London establishment, Old Bond-street, W.

W. Allen.—1. The colours are baked in before the varnish is applied. 2. Any colour maker will give you the proper kind of pigments for the purpose.

A Constant Reader.—Assuredly no. The business and stock should be sold, and the proceeds equally divided among the children of the deceased.

Skeet.—We know of no such villages. Mr. Tweedie, the publisher of works on teetotalism, Strand, London, W.C., will give you, gladly, no doubt, every information.

T. W.—The recipe we gave for making ginger-beer is perfectly correct, and the ingredient you mention is not requisite.

A Constant Reader.—1. To remove superfluous hair, take 2½ oz. of rosin, and 1 oz. of bees'-wax, melt, and then make into sticks for use. 2. See our answer to Fortunatus.

A Constant Reader's appeal to W. H. P., her husband, is not suitable for our columns, but those of the daily newspapers, but perhaps the insertion of this notification may suit her purpose. We cordially hope it will.

Ocean Bird.—1. We know nothing of the advertising medical man. Apply to a respectable professional in your own neighbourhood. 2. About 2*s.* 6*d.* or 3*s.* per volume, according to quality.

Wildrake Cliff.—1. If the coins be of any value you may in all probability dispose of them in Coventry-street, at a coin dealer's, near the Haymarket. 2. The stamps are of no value.

Jane.—It is not absolutely necessary for a will to be drawn up by an attorney. The testator can keep the will in his own possession during life, or deposit it with his banker, or any other person for better security.

Claudius.—1. On being introduced to a lady, a gentleman would unquestionably raise his hat, but anything farther is unnecessary. 2. A gold hoop, studded with turquoise, is suitable for an engagement ring.

Trustee of Ranelagh.—Your question is too complicated for us to answer clearly in these columns; on so important a matter why not consult a solicitor, or better still, the secretary or actuary of the Insurance Company, who would advise you safely.

W. C. B.—To improve the colour of the hands, take 2 oz. of Venice soap, and dissolve it in 2 oz. of lemon juice, add 1 oz. of the oil of bitter almonds, and the same quantity of the oil of tartar; mix all together, and stir it well until it has acquired the consistence of soap; then use as such.

Rose.—To prevent baldness, wash the partings of the hair with cold water, morning and night, dry thoroughly, and then brush the scalp until redness and a warm glow are produced; the head cannot be too much brushed, any more than a horse's coat can be too much groomed.

Charles.—The Zodiac is an imaginary girdle or belt in the heavens through which the planets perform their course; it is divided into twelve portions or signs; the first six are called northern signs, as they lie in the northern hemisphere, the others southern signs.

A. N.—Every morning draw up cold water through the nostrils. The operation is rather unpleasant, but we think it would cure you. Occasionally take a tea-spoonful of raspberry vinegar. If these remedies do not cure you, apply to a medical man, who, by examination, could tell whether it arises from constitutional or local causes.

Roberta.—You are treading on very dangerous ground; the more so, that you have "no objection to the young gentleman's attentions." Be warned in time; "write," as you say, declining to receive his attentions for the future. Being affianced to another it is dishonourable on your part to encourage the second suitor for a single hour.

Jessie Louisa May.—In our opinion the young man is a mean, shabby fellow; and if you have any self-respect you should refuse to receive visits from him; surely he and his friends cannot visit you without your sanction, and in direct opposition to your wishes. Perhaps there is a little jealousy in the case.

Kate.—The word Metronome is derived from the Greek *metron*, measure, and *nomo*, division. It is an instrument employed to mark the time in music, constructed of rose-wood or mahogany, in the shape of an obelisk, and nearly a foot in height; there are two kinds, one being rather complicated, having a pendulum kept in motion by means of a spring and wheelwork; the other is extremely simple, consisting merely of a pendulum without any machinery, made to vibrate by striking it with the finger. As early as 1698 an instrument upon a similar principle was known in France; but it was not until 1812 that the Metronome at present in use was invented, some say by J. N. Maelzel, but others attribute the discovery of the mechanical principle to Winkel of Amsterdam, and assert that Maelzel only added the scale of numbers affixed to the pendulum. This ingenious little instrument was greatly opposed at first, but it is now acknowledged to be of great utility both to composers and performers.

Dumont.—The word *Fourbisseur* means a sword-cutler; the French familiarly say of two persons who are extremely intimate, "*Ces gens sont tête-à-tête, comme des fourbisseurs*," expressing that, like sword-cutlers, (who when they work sit closely, opposite to each other,) they are putting their heads together.

A. S.—The following is an excellent method of making ale-posset; put a small piece of bread into a pint of milk, and place it over the fire, put a little nutmeg and sugar into a pint of ale, warm, and when the milk boils pour it upon the ale, let it stand a few minutes to clear, and it will then be fit for use.

Agatha.—Pearls are the production of certain shell-fish, which are subject to a kind of disease, caused by the introduction of foreign bodies within their shells. In this case, their pearly secretion, instead of being spread in layers upon the inside of their habitation, is accumulated round these particles in concentric layers. Pearl consists of carbonate of lime, interstratified with animal membrane.

Narcissus Le Grand.—1. The only recipe we can give for a speech at a christening is, to be easy and natural. In a few words congratulate the parents on the auspicious event, embodying in your oration a wish that the hopeful offspring may inherit all his mother's virtues, and his father's fortune. 2. To get thinner, take plenty of exercise, and avoid, as much as possible, sugar, milk, beer, potatoes; in short, live very temperately.

ON A LARK.

Oh, joyous lark, no sound of woe
Is mingled with thy strain;
And yet to me, who from below
List to thy song's melodious flow,
Comes whence my spirit scarce doth know
A feeling kin to pain.

Is it that while thy wings on high
Bear thee to heaven's high throne,
Hearing thy song of ecstacy,
As thou ascendest to the sky,
I can but think, and thinking sigh,
That I am left alone?

Thou risest from the earth to heaven,
Like an unbodied soul,
When the last links of life are riven,
And all its sins and wrongs forgiven,
The spirit mounts to join the shriven,
With heaven its goal.

Oh, bird, would there were given to me,
Wings swifter yet than thine,
Far from this dark earth would I flee,
Far beyond all that eye can see,
Where song of thine can never be,
Up to God's holy shrine!

J. H.

A. Jansen.—The "Rubicon" is a small river which formerly divided France and Italy. "To pass the Rubicon," is often used to signify engaging in anything in an irrevocable manner. The expression has reference to the proceeding of Cæsar, who passed the Rubicon, to march against the Senate on his return from Gaul, in the forty-ninth year before Christ, after that body had refused him the consulship.

Nina.—A Knight of the Garter, the Bath or any other Order does not impale the arms of his wife with his own, but they are borne upon a separate shield. That of the knight is placed on the dexter side, and surrounded with the insignia of his order of knighthood. The second shield bears the arms of the knight repeated, together with the arms of his wife impaled; or, if an heiress, borne on an escutcheon of pretence. This shield is not surrounded by knightly insignia.

Allen.—The Minie Rifle, or Culot Ball, is a new species of fire-arm invented by Captain Minie, from whom it receives its name; the ball, instead of being round, is conical, the base being hollow, and the pointed end thus driven towards its object; it is certain in its aim, and fatal in its results, at 800 yards; it is said that the inventor hit a target seven times out of ten shots at a distance of 1,804 yards, the target being about 100 feet in length, and about 18 feet high.

E. M.—Food should pass into the stomach in a finely divided state. The rapidity with which digestion is performed depends upon various circumstances; strong emotion, as anger or grief, will retard it; moderate exercise hastens it, and thus the state, both of body and mind, influences it; a usual meal is generally digested in a healthy person in from three to five hours. A mixture of food is not objectionable, except that it encourages the appetite, and often leads to a greater consumption than needful.

Agnes.—The word *Miserere* is the Latin for "have mercy," and is in general applied to any sacred composition of a penitential character; in the Roman Catholic Church it denotes a celebrated penitential hymn formed from the 51st Psalm, which in the Vulgate begins with the words, "*Miserere mei, Domine*." It has been set to music by several great composers; but the most distinguished is that of Allegri, which is performed annually in the Sistine Chapel at Rome during Passion Week.

J. W.—Air may be mechanically deprived of many of the foreign matters which it holds in suspension, by a process of filtering through finely carded cotton. Flesh exposed to the action of air so treated undergoes decomposition much more slowly than in ordinary atmospheric air, and when decay does supervene, it is unaccompanied by the development of vegetable or animal life. A similar effect may be produced by passing air through red-hot tubes, which by the combustion they generate, destroy any organic substances present. Air thus purified, when introduced into grape juice, fails to promote fermentation like free air. Results resembling these have been obtained from some charcoal air-filters, which combine a mechanical act of filtration with a certain amount of chemical effect, depending on the presence of condensed oxygen in the pores of the carbonaceous matter.

Rhoda.—Good manners are not so much learned as acquired by habit; they grow by use, therefore the best way to attain easy and graceful manners, is always to behave well at home, for the most agreeable persons in company are ever those who are the most agreeable with their intimate relations, and the effort to be agreeable at home not only softens and refines, but tends to increase domestic happiness; on the contrary, a coarse, rough deportment within the family circle, can never be thrown aside when in society.

Fortunatus.—1. To clear the complexion take 1 part of blanched bitter almonds, 16 parts of rose-water; mix and strain, then add 5 grains of bichloride of mercury to every 8 oz. bottle of the mixture. 2. We do not believe in taking much medicine; those who lead a regular and temperate life certainly will not require it, except under peculiar circumstances. 3. To cure eruptions, take 2 gallons of strong soap-suds, add to this 1 pint of pure alcohol, and ½ oz. of rosemary, mix well together; it should be applied with a linen rag.

T. Warner.—Sepia is a pigment prepared from a black juice secreted by certain glands of the cuttle fish, which the animal ejects to darken the water when it is pursued. One part of it is capable of making 1,000 parts of water nearly opaque. All the varieties of this molluscs secrete the same juice; but the *S. officinalis*, the *S. loligo*, and the *S. tunicata* are chiefly sought after for making the pigment. The first, which occurs abundantly in the Mediterranean, affords most colour, the sac containing it being extracted. The juice has to be dried as quickly as possible, because it runs rapidly into putrefaction. Caustic alkalis dissolve the sepia, and turn it brown, but in proportion as the alkali becomes carbonated by exposure to air, the sepia falls to the bottom. Chlorine blanches it slowly.

H. S. and H. P., fair, and good looking. Respondents must be amiable and respectable, and have no objection to grocers; residents of Liverpool preferred.

E. M. C., twenty-one, 5 ft. 6 in., dark hair, blue eyes, in a good situation, and in receipt of 60*l.* per annum. Respondents must be fair, about 5 ft., and domesticated.

Jessie Maitland, seventeen, 5 ft. 2 in., blue eyes, and brown hair. Respondent must be tall, handsome, and about twenty-two; a tradesman's son preferred.

Lily, twenty-one, medium height, fair, dark hazel eyes, light brown hair, ladylike, and domesticated. Respondent must be tall, dark, and not more than twenty-five.

Mabel, twenty-five, medium height, dark brown hair, gray eyes, and fond of home. Respondent must be a tradesman, or a respectable mechanic.

Violetta, twenty, medium height, dark hair and eyes, no fortune, but thoroughly domesticated. Respondent must be rather tall and fair, and not more than twenty-six.

Kate, eighteen, below the medium height, brown hair, blue eyes, good complexion, good tempered, and fond of music. Respondent must be a respectable tradesman.

J. W. Southport, twenty-two, 5 ft. 8 in., fair, blue eyes, dark brown hair and moustache, and in receipt of 120*l.* per annum. Respondent must be about eighteen.

Lonely Harry, twenty-five, 5 ft. 8 in., dark hair and whiskers, good features, a moderate income, gentlemanly in manners and appearance, and fond of music. Respondent must be possessed of a refined taste.

E. Furness, twenty-four, tall, fair, and has 300*l.* per annum. Respondent must be young, amiable, fond of music, home enjoyments, and have a little money. (Handwriting good, but too many flourishes.)

Agnes and Rose. "Agnes," twenty-three, medium height, hazel eyes, auburn hair, lively and domesticated. "Rose," eighteen, medium height, dark eyes and hair, ladylike and domesticated, with a small income. Respondents must be respectable tradesmen, and fond of home.

Clara and Kate. "Clara," twenty, tall, fair, blue eyes, auburn hair, a good musician, good tempered, affectionate, and will have 200*l.* when of age; a clerk preferred. "Kate," nineteen, tall, a brunette, dark hair and eyes, a graceful figure, and will have 200*l.* when of age; a gentleman in the medical profession preferred.

Communications Received:

William G. is responded to by—"A Merry, Good-tempered Girl," kind, brown hair, dark blue eyes, and well educated.

James by—"Miss Hyder," nineteen, 5 ft., dark hair and eyes, thoroughly domesticated, fond of music, and 100*l.* per annum.

Strop and Block by—"Julia," twenty-two, tall, fair, a good pianist, and domesticated—"Kate," eighteen, medium height, light hair, brown eyes, thoroughly domesticated, and affectionate—"Annie," seventeen, brown hair, gray eyes, and a cheerful temper; and—"Clara," eighteen, 5 ft. 5 in., dark brown hair, gray eyes, very affectionate, and domesticated.

Lizzie by—"True Blue," twenty-two, 5 ft. 8 in., dark hair and eyes, and an officer in the Royal Navy.

Lizzie Vernon D. by—"Augustus Orlando," forty-two, and has 1,000*l.* a year.

Ellen by—"T. S. C.," fifty, a widower, and has a good income—"H. T.," fifty-eight, and a widower; and—"Frederick William," forty-four.

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PART 62, VOL. XI.—JULY, 1868.

CONTENTS.

	PAGE
ELLEN LAMBERT'S TWENTY YEARS	121, 145, 181, 197
CORDELIA'S FORTUNE	125, 157, 173, 205
GENTLE LEONIE	130, 154, 178, 200
MICHEL-DEVER	137, 161, 185, 202
THE WITCH FINDER	140, 150, 176, 211
MARGARET	128, 152
LADY ROSLYN'S MYSTERY	169, 194
HONYCHURCH ROOKERY	133
PICKLING BRASS	124
NEW TRENT BRIDGE FOR NOTTINGHAM	124
MANUFACTURE OF COMBS IN ITALY	128
DR. LIVINGSTONE	136
VESUVIUS	136
THE AVENGER OF NELSON	139
WAITING	143
NEW SYSTEMS OF SHIP-BUILDING	148
INFLUENCE OF ARTIFICIAL ILLUMINATION ON THE QUALITY OF THE AIR IN DWELLING HOUSES	148
DORE AND HIS PICTURES	149
THE VEILED PICTURE	164
CHANGES	165
TO MARY IN ABSENCE	167
DIAMOND CUT DIAMOND	172
DAYS WITHOUT NIGHTS	178
PRESENCE OF OZONE IN THE ATMOSPHERE	184
ROSE'S TREACHERY	188
A MOTHER'S ADVICE TO HER DAUGHTER	189
THE THISTLE FLOWER	191
THE LATE LORD BROUGHAM	209
ABYSSINIAN FEMALE COSTUME	213
LAMPLIGHTING BY CLOCKWORK	213
EXPERIMENTS WITH PALLISER SHOT	214
THE BARON AND THE POET	215
FACETIÆ—MISCELLANEOUS—SCIENCE—STATISTICS—GEMS—HOUSEHOLD TREASURES—POETRY—NOTICES TO CORRESPONDENTS.	

ILLUSTRATIONS.

	PAGE
RUTH'S CONSOLATION	121
DOCTOR CARTWRIGHT'S INTERESTING PATIENT	125
LIZETTE SPEAKS OUT	132
DOCTOR BROWN'S EXPERIMENT	133
LAPIERRE PREPARES CLAIRE FOR THE FUTURE	137
MADAME LAMBERT AND VARIMONT	145
PAUL GUSTAVE DORE	149
THE DUKE CONFRONTS HIS WIFE	156
A STRANGE VISITOR	157
MRS. COURTNAY'S SYMPATHY	161
THE BRIDE ARRIVES AT ROSLYN MANOR	169
THE GRIP AND THE PASS-WORD	173
COUNT FONTENIER MAKES A DISCOVERY	180
MAT RIGBY'S SURPRISE	181
JEROME'S ADVICE TO CLAIRE	185
HUSH MONEY	193
MATTEO IS FOUND	197
CLAIRE'S FIRST DOUBT	204
FITZROY'S UNPLEASANT ERRAND	205
LORD BROUGHAM	209

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